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A Qualitative Study of Counsellors' Experiences and Perceptions of the Evolving Political and Professional Environment.

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ABSTRACT

Since the early 1990s, the counsellor's world has become increasingly professionalised and politicised requiring counsellors to fulfill ever more increasing obligations and responsibilities in order to practice. Counsellors undergo extensive training, adopt 'ethical frameworks for practice', are insured for purpose, commit to regular supervision and undergo regular CPD. They often volunteer or work with marginalised clients from some of the hardest to reach communities. There is a huge demand for counselling, yet career prospects for counsellors are both bleak and at the mercy of government policy and national economics. Using the data from 8 semi-structured interviews, this qualitative, phenomenological research explored counsellors' experiences and perceptions of the evolving political and professional climate. The data was transcribed and analysed using the constant comparative method and found counsellors entered training from a position of confidence believing themselves to be the right type of person for a career in counselling. However, the training process was difficult to manage, with many strands to the learning and they felt unsupported and overwhelmed. Counsellors had polarised experiences of placements, finding unprofessional practice in some placements, whilst others were reported to be very professional, exceptionally well run and emotionally supportive to them. Counsellors struggled to find paid employment, exacerbated by government's massive funding of IAPT to the Health Service. They saw their own voluntary organisations lose funding, apply redundancy measures and reduce counsellor delivery hours. The government's planned statutory regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists however, was viewed with optimism, anticipating that it would provide them the necessary validity to work professionally as a counsellor. The research offers the opportunity for a longitudinal study, to explore participants' existing experience within the current political and professional climate. It also contributes to the body of research tracking the trajectory of the political and professional development of the counselling profession.

DECLARATION

This work is original and has not been submitted previously in respect of any qualification or course.

Geraldine Johnson

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- My good friend, Dr. Fred Fortune for her unerring engagement in endless debate and rhetoric with me, whilst also believably asserting her enjoyment of such.

**Dedicated to my mother
Sarah-Jane McEwan (1939-2007)
Sally**

Who always encouraged unfettered and uncensored political debate around the dinner table, promoting us to “make up your own minds”. She was an ardent advocate of education, particularly for women and I was lucky enough to see her take on some of the challenges of 70’s feminism with feisty wit and intelligence. She inspired me a lot.

She had the dry, dark, sense of humour required to be a life-long Liverpool F.C. fan. Retaining a child-like curiosity and a zest for adventure...she was a lot of fun.

My chief cheerleader and first feminist icon would have been very proud.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BAC	British Association for Counselling
BACP	British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy
BABCP	British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies
BPS	British Psychological Society
CBT	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
COSCA	Counselling and Psychotherapy in Scotland
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DfS	Department for Skills
DoH	Department of Health
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
FE	Further Education
GP	General Practitioner
HE	Higher Education
HPC	Health Professions Council
IAPT	Improving Access to Psychological Therapies
IHP	Integrative Humanistic Psychotherapy
NHS	National Health Service
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
PC	Person-Centred
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PLG	Professional Liaison Group
UCL	University College London
UK	United Kingdom
UKCP	United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy

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CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Over the last decade the counselling profession in the United Kingdom (UK) has been subject to a huge amount of change, endorsed and determined by government's attempt to address the major social and economic impact of high levels of unemployment, exacerbated by the huge numbers of people claiming sickness benefits due to mental health problems. The profession has seen a seismic shift to towards a more structured, regulated, environment, where formerly there existed a more insular, reflective, self-regulated approach delivered through membership of a professional body. The speed and enormity of the changes has impacted on all aspects of the profession including Higher and Further Education (HE/FE), counsellors' placements, counsellors' employment opportunities and counsellors' professional bodies. The rationale for this study is to look more deeply at how counsellors are facing these testing times, living with and through such extensive political shift.

In January 2005, economist, Lord Richard Layard, presented his findings from his white paper '*Mental Health: Britain's biggest social problem?*' to the Prime Minister Strategy Unit, indicating that: "*There are now more mentally ill people drawing incapacity benefits than there are unemployed people on Job Seeker's Allowance*" (Layard, 2005, p.2). To tackle this problem he advocated a network of 250 centres, which would employ 10,000 therapists across the country - at a cost of £200 million per year: citing advantages not only for society, but also for clients who would see shorter waiting lists, easier access

to therapy and less stigma around mental health. Layard (2005) questioned why only 4% of all those with depression and anxiety disorders received psychological therapy in the past year (Layard, 2006, p.2), when all the evidence suggests that talking therapies are popular with patients who often do not want the drugs widely handed out by GPs (General Practitioners). At the time of Layard's report, I was nearing the end of my counselling training envisaging a wealth of opportunities for graduate counsellors, in an industry about to grow exponentially. The reality was quite different. A keyword search on NHS Jobs (August 2009) produced the following results: "Counsellor" - 3 vacancies, "Therapist" - 94 vacancies. I started to look more deeply at the government plans and how they were being implemented, to try to ascertain the impact on both my peers and myself in our fledgling careers.

On the back of Layard's recommendations and in response to proposals in a simultaneous white paper '*Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*', the Department of Health (DoH) introduced the '*Improving Access to Psychological Therapies*' (IAPT) programme, establishing two pilot sites in Doncaster and Newham to deliver therapy specifically to adults of working age (IAPT, 2006). □ However, when it came to recommendations for the treatment of mental health, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidelines assigned a distinct bias towards cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), citing its strong evidence-base (Cohen, Mannarino, Deblinger, 2006) and superior efficacy over client-centred treatment (Follette, Rusek, 2007). In order to satisfy NICE requirements the IAPT service commenced the recruitment and training of health professionals from across disciplines, declaring a commitment to treatments being provided "*by clinicians with appropriate training in the*

relevant intervention” (IAPT, 2008, p.8), effectually prohibiting person-centred counsellors from applying to the roles.

In order to offer a robust legal framework to IAPT the government also planned to introduce ‘statutory regulation’ for psychotherapists, counsellors and other talking therapists (DoH, 2007, p.81). The Health Professions Council (HPC) were selected as the regulator “*against the advice of all the major counselling and psychotherapy organisations*” (Rogers, 2010, p.3) and they subsequently set up a Professional Liaison Group (PLG), ‘*to draft the standards of proficiency that all counsellors and psychotherapists would be obliged to meet*’ (p.3). There were many dissenting voices about the speed and process of the HPC plans, not least Barden (2007) ‘Chair of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy’ (BACP) who expressed her disapproval at their forging ahead, “*regardless of the participation of the aspirant profession*” (p.2). By 2009 many in the profession were resigned to the notion of statutory regulation, although significant numbers were still advocating ‘principled non-compliance’ (House, 2005; Postle, 2007; Thorne, 2009; Rogers, 2009). Dissenters views were presented at a meeting in Westminster (November 2009) chaired by Anne Milton, Member of Parliament (MP) and Conservative Shadow Minister for Health who said that, “*across her Parliamentary career she had not experienced the level of lobbying and volume of mail she had received in relation to statutory regulation*” (BACP, 2009). A change of government in May 2010 saw the PLG reconvene and precipitated the HPC to write for clarification on the new coalition government’s stance on statutory regulation, who said “*...it is not currently our intention to proceed with statutory regulation*” (DoH, 2011).

1.2 AIMS OF THE STUDY

It was against the backdrop of these enormous changes that I proposed this study, to explore the impact of the evolving political and professional environment on graduate person-centred counsellors, specifically to look at the participants' experiences and perceptions of their training, volunteering, working, and being in a profession in the midst of massive change.

In order to explore the phenomena, I have undertaken a small-scale qualitative research study, interviewing eight graduate person-centred counsellors. I used a phenomenological approach, drawing participants from a purposive sample and collecting data via semi-structured interviews of 30 - 60 minutes duration. Applying the constant comparative method of data analysis, adapted from grounded theory, the findings are summarised in Chapter 4. The study looks at the actual changes occurring in the counsellors' professional environment and then focuses in on their thoughts, feelings and perceptions of how these changes have impacted on them both personally and professionally. The research question was divided into five areas for exploration as follows:

1. What motivated the participants to commence counsellor training?
2. Did their counsellor training prepare them for a professional career?
3. What was the participants' experience of placement, volunteering and employment and was it impacted by political change?
4. What were the participants' views of their professional body? Their function, interaction, influences?

5. How much knowledge and engagement did the participants have of current political changes pertaining to the regulation of counsellors and the delivery of client therapy?

"The subject of qualitative interviewing is the life-world of the interviewee and his/her relation to it" (McLeod, 2003, p.75) and to this end the study makes no attempt to seek an absolute truth, but rather focuses on the counsellors' unique experiences of all the facets of their profession, the anticipation being to identify common themes and views, with the added potential of specific findings informing future practice. I have drawn much from the findings reported by McGivern, Fischer, Ferlie and Exworthy (2009) in their research paper '*Evidence from the Field*' which looks at counsellors perceptions of IAPT, the CBT model and Regulation from those that work both for the NHS and independently and also Wheeler's research (1996, 1997, 2000, 2002) on counsellors' motivation to commence training and their training experiences.

At the time of writing (2013) the counselling profession's evolution continues apace with many aspects of the study being impacted by this. In the epilogue (Appendix 1) I chart the tension of working with dynamic, evolving, material, revising the political and professional picture for the benefit of the reader. In the next chapter I review the literature relevant to the study and in Chapter 3 describe the design and methodology for the research. Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study and in chapter 5 they are discussed and located in the literature with resulting conclusions drawn in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER TWO LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 SEARCH STRATEGIES

A considerable amount of literature has been published on the political changes in the counselling profession with literally hundreds of letters, articles, interviews and comment pieces appearing in professional journals and the national media (Rogers, 2010). For that reason and also due to the contemporary nature of the study, this literature review has been limited to publications from the last fifteen years pertaining to political aspects, and also only that which applies to the UK.

A full search strategy plan was devised, prior to conducting an initial brief literature review in fulfilment of the research proposal requirements. This stimulated further investigation into the research question and a more comprehensive literature search was completed after the study was designed (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), limiting the introduction of unintentional bias (McLeod, 2003) and allowing the researcher to return to the literature with a fresh perspective to review emerging publications (Appendix 2).

The review began with a manual search of books, journals and dissertations in the library of University of Chester, after which the search expanded making use of the online databases: Cinahl Plus, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS and Psychology and Behavioural Sciences. Additional online resources were accessed including key speeches from conferences, government websites and professional body websites, most notably the BACP. To facilitate the dynamic and evolving nature of the study, search terms were entered and stored in the University of Chester 'Zetoc' database

which alerted the researcher via email notifications as and when new publications were added.

Using the Boolean operators AND, OR, NOT and the Wildcard and truncation symbols ? and * I was able to combine key search terms to explore the various areas of the topic and omit literature that might be outside of the parameters set. Searches were both date restricted and limited to literature pertaining to the UK. Key search terms used: “Graduate” “Counsellor” “Therapist” “Practitioner” NOT “Counselor” or “Clinician” and combinations with the following: “Personality” “Education” “Training” “Concepts” “Certificate” “Diploma” “Higher Education” “HE” “Further Education” “FE” “Trainee” “Volunteer” “Placement” “Profession/al/ism” “Professionalisation” “Industry” “Regulation” “IAPT” “Un/employment” “Jobs” “Vacancies” “Money” “Value/ing.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF AREAS COVERED

Due to the proliferation of publications, the literature review has been divided into five themes (McLeod, 2003) as detailed in chapter one, for exploration as follows:

- Motivation to become a counsellor.
- Counsellor training experience.
- Counsellor volunteering and employment.
- Counsellor professional body and accreditation.
- Counsellor knowledge of and engagement with political change.

2.3 MOTIVATION TO BECOME A COUNSELLOR

The selection of counselling students for training is a difficult and sensitive process and *“teasing out the motivation of an applicant to undertake therapy training is both subtle and demanding”* (Wheeler, 2002, p.434). Whilst applicants commonly express a desire to help, research evidence points to the idea that potential therapists may bring unresolved issues or *“an area of pain, of unfinished mourning”* (Mander, 2004, p. 163) to training. One way to uncover these issues is to look at the applicant’s desire or drive to work with a specific client group for which, *“sometimes the reasons for the choice are obvious and understood”* (Wheeler, 2002, p. 435), but for recruiters can *“provide clues”* (p.435) to unconscious or unresolved material. Buchanan and Hughes’ (2000) study found two strong themes running throughout their research that motivated students towards counselling: a) The *“trainee feels the need to change their life”* and b) *“feeling that something is missing from their current area of work”* (p.5).

The personality traits and personal qualities of the candidate of being trustworthy, a good listener, having respect, openness, genuineness and a good sense of humour (Guy, 1987) were givens across studies (Rogers, 1957; Hosford, Johnson, Atkinson, 1984; McLeod, 1994; Pope, 1996; Mearns, 1997; Wheeler, 2000) as strong indicators of a potential counsellor candidate. A number of skills often associated with older more experienced candidates were also cited: time-management, self-management, stamina, intelligence, good memory, flexibility (Strong & Dixon, 1971; Frank, 1973; Bor & Palmer, 2002; Wheeler, 2002), emotional stability (McCrea & Costa, 1986) and maturity (Buchanan & Hughes, 2000). Broadly across studies (Buchanan &

Hughes, 2000; Banning, 2012; Richards, 2002; Wheeler, 2002) motivational factors to commence counsellor training fell under five main themes:

1. Major life transition inducing reflexivity and life-changing choices.
2. Personal and professional development; to fill skills gaps in their current work or for professional advancement.
3. A desire to “give something back” to community, society, people.
4. Feeling that something is missing in life, being drawn to counselling, filling a spiritual need or void.
5. Experiencing counselling as a client.

2.4 COUNSELLOR TRAINING EXPERIENCE

The literature finds that potential students often have “*little awareness prior to training of all that is involved*” (Potter, 1997). Lynne Kaye, Director of CPPD Counselling School, says that when interviewing she really lays it on the line telling applicants, “*it’s hard graft all the way*” and adds that it is a “*misrepresentation*” for training providers to intimate that “*it’s easy*”, given the sums of money people are paying (Banning, 2012).

MacKenzie and Hamilton’s (2007) study demonstrates students’ considerable enjoyment of early training with levels of satisfaction recorded as “*high*” (p.241). Whilst aware that the “*certificate alone would not constitute professional recognition*” (p.233), students reported the “*considerable impact*” (p.243) on their lives that the training had delivered, equipping them to flourish in different areas of their lives and encouraging a high number onto further study. A review of students’ experiences of the diploma training however paints a gloomier picture. Truell’s (2001, p. 86-87) study on the stressful

effects of training had much to offer this part of the review, which concluded that:

- Counselling trainees reported significant negative feelings during their training.
- Counselling trainers did not address these issues effectively.
- Trainees needed a variety of supports to help reduce the negative effects of learning counselling.

Mearns (1997) posits that cultural expectations of tutors can be that of a parent-child nature and in counselling can extend beyond practical implications to also include, *“look after me”, “don’t be so hard on me”, “protect me”* (p.34). The literature shows that role confusion and blurred boundaries (Bennett’s 2003; Mearns, 1997) can be a source of significant stress for students (Truett, 2001) who have expectations of a counsellor-client type relationship with their tutor. The lack of direct engagement from tutors therefore was experienced as confusing (Mackenzie & Hamilton, 2007) and the lack of attention to emotional needs, *“un-supportive”* (Truett, 2001, p.82).

In other developments counsellor training has been impacted by what House (2001b) describes as the ‘academisation’ of training; in response to statutory regulation, seeing a distinctive movement toward university-based courses and clear evidence of a decrease in the number of FE counsellor training courses (Coldridge & Mickelborough, 2003). CPCAB (2008) expressed their concerns saying, *“regulation should be about setting standards, not specific types of qualifications”* (p.8) and urged various routes to training be maintained. Mowbray (1999) agrees, arguing that higher qualifications to professional entry makes training more exclusive, discriminatory and stifles innovation. Figures from the BACP (2013) website confirm the move toward

academia showing 55% of their current membership having a degree or post-graduate qualification. Statistics also supports the theory that counsellor training largely attracts white, middle-class, females, (Coldridge & Mickelborough, 2003) bolstering historical evidence of the archetypal image of a counsellor (Lago, 2006; Moodley, 2000; Ogilsby, 2001).

2.5 COUNSELLORS VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

Vicki Palmer; a tutor on the diploma course at the University of Bristol stated, *“the majority of trainees come onto courses hoping for a career in counselling”* (Banning, 2012), but studies show that at the outset there is little awareness of *“how few actual counselling jobs are available”* (Potter, 1997; Feltham, 2000; Banning, 2012). Feltham (2000, p.19) however posits that, *“It is perhaps an open secret that (...) relatively few (full-time) jobs exist”*. Halifax (2009) concurs, adding that in spite of training in a service that is in *“high demand”* students were *“struggling to find placements”* and with so many graduates year on year, thought it unlikely that all would get work. Due to the amendments to training courses, placement organisations are similarly perplexed. *“Training standards are inconsistent”* said Mind (2009, p.1), making it difficult to judge what trainees have done or are capable of when making an offer. The situation worsens after qualification, with the variety of backgrounds and orientation (Buchanan & Hughes, 2000) making it *“very difficult for a GP practice to know exactly what it would get”* (Hooper & Weitz, 2006, p.146). Studies (Truell, 2001; Bennett, 2003; King, 2007) posit a gap in training provision here, a component labelled *‘becoming a counsellor’* or *‘career development’* that covers the transition from trainee to professional. The placement appears to bridge this gap to some extent, providing client

experience, CPD, emotional support, and most importantly an “*acute need for positive mentors*” (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 2003, p.3).

Feltham (2000) opined that the proliferation of training courses were likely to reduce as prospective students realised that the large financial outlay was a risk not “*matched by employment prospects*” (2000, p. 18). However ‘*Therapy Today*’ recently sported 17 pages of adverts for training alongside just three adverts for paid counselling posts (2012) reflecting findings (Bondi, Fewell, & Kirkwood, 2003) that, “*the supply of qualified counsellors greatly exceeds the availability of paid counselling work*” (p, 19). Looking at the bigger picture, a survey by Mellor-Clark in 2001 showed that 51 per cent of GP practices in England and Wales offered counselling compared with just 31 per cent in 1992 (Coldridge & Mickelborough, 2003), suggesting that counselling provision is, on the whole growing. BACP figures show 64% of respondents were paid for all their counselling work, 21% a mixture of paid and unpaid work and 15% volunteering (BACP, 2006b, p40), dispelling the myth that counselling work prospects are limited (Potter, 1997). However, King’s (2007) study of graduate counsellors found 22.5% working unpaid exclusively, concluding that recently graduated counsellors experience greater difficulty obtaining paid counselling work than their more experienced counterparts. Bondi et al (2003) counter that ‘working for free’ is a striking feature of the counselling profession and that for some students “*this is my contribution...It’s strictly volunteer and that’s all it will ever be*” (Banning, 2012).

2.6 COUNSELLOR PROFESSIONAL BODIES AND ACCREDITATION

Of the four main professional bodies (BACP, BABCP, UKCP and BPS) that represent counsellors and psychotherapists, the BACP has the largest counsellor membership and this part of the review focuses on them. Initially formed as a group of organisations seeking the advancement of counselling in 1970 the BAC (as it was known) opened its doors to individual membership in 1978. In 2000 the association changed its name to BACP, acknowledging the many psychotherapists in its ranks and today current membership numbers stand at around 39,000 (BACP, 2013).

The BACP sets out a full 'ethical framework' which gives the counsellor a context in which to work and also contains a complaints procedure allowing for the hearing and full adjudication of complaints from clients. Khele, Symons & Wheeler's (2008) analysis of complaints to the BACP (1996-2006) however, found that only 29% were brought by lay people, against 71% brought by trainee counsellors, counsellors, volunteer counsellors and other related professionals such as counselling psychologists combined. Mind (2009) have drawn attention to the fact that whilst it is important to have a complaints procedure, the process varies from association to association making it extremely complicated for clients who are also (rightly or wrongly) discouraged by the perception that "*the professional body will be prejudiced*" against them, choosing to protect the interests of their members and the reputation of the profession.

Students are actively encouraged to join the BACP during training and once qualified can progress to full-membership. In 1983 the BACP introduced their

accreditation scheme “*undeterred by the lack of an evidential base and the doubts there are about the whole notion of accreditation/registration of practitioners*” (Dryden, Mearns, Thorne, 2000, p.24) and it continues to attract increasing numbers of aspirants, which Dryden, Mearns and Thorne (2000) posit is driven by counsellors’ finding it difficult to gain employment without it. Figures from the BACP (2013) show 28% of its members have full accreditation, with others working towards it rating it, ‘very important’ or ‘essential’ (King, 2007) and that it implies counsellor ‘accountability’, ‘credibility’ and ‘professional integrity’ to the public.

Recent changes to the accreditation process has included the introduction of CPD amounting to 30 hours per year, perhaps in response to the understanding that a regulatory body would require evidence of ongoing CPD as standard. Counsellors currently need 450 hours of practice in order to apply for accreditation, which impacts punitively on graduate counsellors, creating an experience gap that can only be filled with continued volunteering.

2.7 COUNSELLOR KNOWLEDGE OF AND ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICAL CHANGE.

This section is divided into two sub headings: the first briefly explores the professionalisation of counselling and the proposed Statutory Regulation of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. The second section reviews the IAPT (Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies) service: how it was implemented, received and viewed by practitioners and service users, alongside reviews of the service in action.

2.7.1 STATUTORY REGULATION

Since its inception counselling has largely been an unregulated, unmonitored, activity. In the 1970s professional bodies sprang up to self-regulate and act as ethical and moral guides. The subsequent adoption of counsellors into organisations as part of their service offering, meant that counselling services had to both consider existing employment law and also the fact that counsellors would be open to litigation, precipitating the need for public liability and indemnity insurance (House, 2001a).

Following the white paper of 2005 and with the advent of so many new therapists to the field, the government introduced a requirement for therapists to be regulated under the umbrella of the HPC. Psychologists would be first to register (July 2009) followed by other mental health professionals. The rationale was to offer a simpler system to clients who could check therapists registration on the website. Supporters of the move claimed that it would *“enhance public protection and raise the status of the profession”*. Rogers (2010, p.4) and Mind (2009) agreed presenting the case that: *“at present, anyone can advertise as a psychotherapist or counsellor”* (April 2009).

Arguments against regulation have abounded for many years (Mowbray, 1999; House & Totten, 2011; House, 2003), but in spite of this the HPC and the PLG convened (2008) to discuss draft legislation, subject to a three-month consultation, with planned implementation for regulation of counsellors and psychotherapists in 2011. The BACP voiced their opposition to the HPC as the appointed regulator saying: *“they use a ‘medical model’ to understand human experience and relationships, which most counsellors and psychotherapists do not”* (BACP, 2009b). The structure of the register and

protection of titles were also cause for consternation. Whilst 84% of the membership agreed to the protection of titles, there was dissent around qualification entry criteria, routes onto the register and differentiation between the roles of counsellor and psychotherapist, a distinction disputed by a substantial portion of the profession (BACP, 2009b). The HPC were seeking entry Level 7 for Psychotherapists and entry Level 5 for Counsellors, effectively disallowing counsellors from working with more complex mental health problems. The BACP said that this was *“not reflecting reality”* (BACP, 2009) *“clients don’t assess the problems they bring to the talking therapies!”* (Senior Accredited Counsellor, BACP, 2009). A senior lecturer further posited, *“there are equal numbers of counselling and psychotherapy courses at level 7”* (BACP, 2009), so why the need for differentiation on the register? 87% of respondents to an HPC questionnaire said that they were opposed to differentiation with a similar number saying that they would like protected titles (HPC, Council Meeting, 2009). As discussions advanced the BACP encouraged counsellors and psychotherapists to become accredited which offered (in their view) the most direct route onto the register. Others were still antagonistically calling for the BACP to *“actively demonstrate its opposition to the HPC”* (Bereavement Services Manager, BACP, 2009). *‘The Maresfield Report’* (2009) concurred adding that hypothetically regulation could put more clients at risk by encouraging them to trust counsellors simply because they are on a register. Mind (2009) alongside the majority of BACP membership, expressed concerns about the cost of regulation and their hope that *“the registration fee (...) is not financially prohibitive”*. Whilst consultations between the HPC, PLG and BACP continued throughout 2010, a change of government in May 2010 precipitated the paper *‘Enabling Excellence’* (2011)

which acknowledged that the regulatory framework is “*complex, expensive and requires continuous Government intervention to keep it up to date*” (p.3), and that ‘reducing regulation’ was a key priority for the coalition government, who posited plans in favour of voluntary accredited registers as an alternative to statutory regulation.

2.7.2 IAPT AND CBT

The government’s launch of the IAPT Programme in 2005 aimed to improve access to psychological therapies. During 2008/09 - 35 Primary Care Trusts received a share of £33 million to train therapists and by the end of 2009 the NHS had trained 3000 staff in the “*provision of NICE approved treatments*”, mainly constituting the delivery of CBT, through a stepped care process - “*slashing waiting times and helping patients achieve recovery that they can clearly see*” (IAPT: NHS website). Layard’s proposals (2005, 2006) advocated the training in CBT of 5,000 psychological therapists from existing staff in the NHS: nurses, occupational therapists and social workers, saying: “*These people have a wealth of experience of people’s mental problems and many of them have just the right personal qualities to make good therapists*” (2006, p.10). Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of these same staff felt pressured into unplanned CPD. Whilst one study asserted that CBT doubled the rate at which unemployed people find work (Proudfoot, Guest, Carson, Dunn & Gray, 1997) there have been many dissenting voices in the profession with regard to the focus on CBT, not least - David Murphy, Lecturer in Counselling and Trauma Studies, University of Nottingham, who wrote:

When the IAPT initiative was first announced, there was understandable excitement. Trained counsellors and psychotherapists working in primary care could have the opportunity to gain reasonably well paid work whilst remaining faithful to the model in which they initially trained. However, then came news that IAPT would be tied to NICE Guidelines and that CBT was going to be the approach.

(Murphy, 2013)

Nicola Barden (2008), the Chair of the BACP, summed up the feelings of frustration expressed by many of the membership asking: *“How did we get to the place where £173 million investment in the provision of psychological therapies was not only good news?”*

On a positive note, Rebekah Nulson (2012) a therapist undertaking IAPT training said she found the work *“undeniably interesting”* and that she appreciated being paid to work whilst training. An analysis of measured outcomes from the 12-month Doncaster pilot showed *“76 per cent of depression sufferers who completed treatment were either in recovery or remission, as were 74 per cent of the anxiety sufferers”* (BPS, 2009). Alan Cohen (The National Advisor for Primary Care to the IAPT programme) said IAPT has gone from *“strength to strength”* (BPS, 2009) and that the planned expansion to 115 sites would go ahead.

Critics however invite us to look beneath the glossy headlines saying, this is *“a prime example of the kind of uncritical perspective that counselling and psychotherapy can do well without”* (McInnes, 2011). Sartori’s (2011) scrutiny of the figures show that with estimates of 6 million-depression sufferers UK wide, the figures imply that just 2% of the *“depressed and anxious population”* accessed IAPT and 58% of referrals *“received no treatment at all”*. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the wait between referral and treatment is a

discouragement and a survey of 590 UK doctors appears to confirm this, saying that they can "*rarely*" offer therapy below two months (Savage, 2010). In spite of its critics, the '*IAPT three-year report: The first million patients*' (IAPT: 2012) boasts having in parts, "*exceeded expectations*" (p. 5) citing 45,000 people moving back into work. Dr. Ali Parrish (GP, Selsey Medical Practice) said: "*I hear GP colleagues saying that it's the single most positive change to their medical practice in the last 20 years and I echo this*" (IAPT, 2012, p.8).

2.8 SUMMARY OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review highlights how the counsellors' world is impacted from every angle by the evolving political and professionalisation of their industry. The counsellors' motivations for entry to the profession are charted (Richards, 2002; Buchanan & Hughes, 2000; Banning, 2012; Richards, 2002; Wheeler, 2002) and the impact of government policy on training establishments is revealed as they rush to amend courses to align with policy. The demands of counsellor training at Diploma Level are divulged (Mackenzie & Hamilton, 2007; Truell, 2001) and a difficult job market is exposed, showing both voluntary and paid positions scarce (Banning, 2012). The literature explores the complex and lengthy negotiations with regard to the regulation of counsellors alongside the government's focus on the implementation and drive to success of the IAPT programme. Chapter 3 describes the design, philosophy and methods used to undertake the study.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY AND DESIGN

The traditional 'quantitative' approach to research described as the 'positivist paradigm' (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), is dominated by a belief in objective observation (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Reductionist and statistical in design, it treats participants as mere research subjects, seeking causality and a single, knowable, objective truth (McLeod, 1999). It is often based on analysis of numerical data (Balnaves & Caputi, 2001) or used to test hypotheses (Lehmann & Moore, 1983) independent from researcher influence (Denscombe, 2007).

By contrast 'qualitative' research, "the emerging' paradigm" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) takes a more holistic approach, seeking to make meaning from complicated or extensive data in a wider and more profoundly deep and meaningful way, exploring "*multiple realities*" (Maykut & Morehouse 1994) that are interconnected with "*only tentative explanations for one time and place possible.*" As this study aimed to explore counsellors' perceptions of the changes in their profession and their unique experiences within this during a specific moment in time, a qualitative study was deemed the most appropriate method to facilitate this.

The qualitative approach is rooted in phenomenology, which Denscombe (2007) describes as "*concerned, first and foremost with human experience; it is seen, heard, touched, smelled tasted*". The researcher is "*required to 'get inside the (...) socially normative regularities' of the person(s)' life*" (Spinelli,

2005) and have *“an empathic and imaginative identification with the subject”* (Gillett, 1995, p.112). The advantages of phenomenology as an approach coupled with the qualitative method are that it offers the prospect of presenting authentic accounts of complex phenomena (Denscombe, 2007, p.85), focusing on *“how people make sense of the world they live in and the experiences they have undergone”*. It is humanistic in style, suited to small-scale studies and can be presented as an interesting story. The disadvantages are that it is viewed in more traditionalist research arenas as lacking the scientific rigour associated with description and minimal analysis.

McLeod (1994, p4) defines research as *“a systematic process of critical inquiry leading to valid propositions and conclusions that are communicated to interested others”* and explains that there are many routes to arriving at the propositional outcomes. In order to process the data for this study I have used the Constant Comparative Method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), *“a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed”* (Bowen, 2008) which aims to ‘discover’ new ways of making sense of the world by two operations: *a) asking questions and b) making comparisons* (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p.73). The discovery element and the lack of hypothesis as a starting point fit the aims of this study well, allowing the researcher to examine the words used in the text and the feelings expressed, discover the themes and patterns that bond them and re-present the information via a number of themes and sub-themes holding true to the participants’ original intent.

3.2 SAMPLE

This study does not seek to generalise in terms of the UK population but rather to discover more about a particular phenomena, hence a *non-probability sampling technique* was chosen as the most appropriate tool, the data being drawn from a *purposive sample*, participants having been “*handpicked*” (Denscombe, 2003) by means of a pre-constructed set of criteria (Moustakas, 1994). The advantages of a purposive sample are that the researcher sets the criteria for the study (Table 1), knows something about both the subject and the participants and the participants are relevant to the topic. By setting the criteria for inclusion the researcher attempts to understand and make sense of the data by engaging participants, “*that represent the range of experience on the phenomenon in which we are interested*” (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994, p.57).

Inclusion Criteria	Rationale
Qualified Person-Centred Counsellors	To explore the impact of the government changes (IAPT, Regulation) on the career opportunities of recently graduated, Person-Centred counsellors. Humanistic Models had been omitted from the models agreed for use in the Department for Skills (DfS) framework for IAPT services.
Graduated between 2005-2008	The study is framed in a three-year period to ensure that the participants were experiencing the politics and changes in the profession from a similar profile background
Able to consent to take part in the research	Counsellors employers sometimes disallow them from contributing to research to preserve business privacy.
Access to a supervisor.	In order to manage the risks of any issues that may have arisen from taking part in the research.
Exclusion Criteria	Rationale
Trainee counsellors and Counsellors from models other than person-centred	The DfS recommended three models for practice in IAPT. My assumptions are that Counsellors from recommended models will have been impacted by government changes in a different way to Person-Centred Counsellors, which would have altered the aims and outcomes of the study significantly.
Graduated outside of the time limits set.	My assumption is that counsellors with significant counselling experience (5 years or more) would be impacted less by government changes, being bolstered and protected somewhat by their professional experience.

Table 1

3.3 RECRUITMENT

The participants were recruited by means of a non-discriminative snowballing technique (Rowan & Huston, 1997) utilising my network of colleagues and friends in a “*chain-referral*” (Jeffri, 2004) system to “*identify people with a similar trait of interest*” (Castillo, 2009). This allows the researcher to reach participants who are representative of only a small sample of the general population (Patrick, Pruchno & Rose, 1998) and is simple, cost effective and requires little advance planning. The study was further advertised via a professional journal (Appendix 3) and emails to charities and universities (Appendix 4) with a poster (Appendix 5) for display. This study includes 8 self-selected participants, 6 Females and 2 Males, based on their inclusion criteria match and availability to participate (Table 2).

Profiles of the Participants									
P	G	Area	Age	T	Q	YofG	App.	P.B.	Accred.
A	M	NW	51-60	C	Ad. Dip	2007	PC	BACP	No
B	M	NW	51-60	C	Dip	2007	PC	BACP	No
C	F	NW	51-60	C	Dip	2007	PC	BACP	No
D	F	NW	41-50	C	Dip	2008	PC	BACP	No
E	F	NW	41-50	C	Dip	2008	PC CBT	BACP	No
F	F	NW	41-50	U	Ad. Dip	2008	PC	BACP	No
G	F	SE	41-50	C	Ad. Dip	2008	INT	BACP	No
H	F	MID	71+	C	Dip	2006	PC	BACP	No

Table 2

Key		
1. P	=	Pseudonym /letter
2. G	=	Gender
3. Area	=	Geographical area
4. Age	=	Age range within 10 years
5. T	=	Training. C=College. U=University.
6. Q	=	Qualification. Dip=Diploma. Ad Dip=Advanced Diploma
7. YofG	=	Year of graduation
8. App.	=	Approach. PC=Person-Centred. CBT=Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Int. =Integrative.
9. P.B.=		Professional Body.
10. Accred	=	Accredited.

3.4 PILOT INTERVIEWS

In order to facilitate the strengthening of the inclusion criteria and interview questions I conducted two pilot interviews after which, the interview questions were amended (Appendix 6) and the sampling process refined and simplified (Appendix 7). The interviews did not contribute to the research data nor alter the inclusion criteria, but in addition to the above allowed me an important rehearsal in 'research interviewing' taking into consideration the boundaries between counselling and research (Dallos & Vetere, 2005).

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

I set a target of obtaining 6-12 participants in the hope of encapsulating a diverse group of participants in terms of gender, age, ethnic and geographical background. A pro-forma questionnaire (Appendix 8) gathered demographic information and confirmed participants' eligibility to take part in the study. I invested in a digital recorder and an attachment for my telephone landline, enabling participants a choice of face-to-face or telephone interviews. Six interviews took place face to face and two by telephone and were conducted as and when appropriate participants emerged over a period of ten months, October 2009 – July 2010.

Patton (2002) warns that standardised questions may limit responses and lead to data lacking in depth and also potentially bias the study toward the researcher's view (Denscombe 2007). With this in mind I prepared a semi-structured interview utilising a set of questions that ran in logical chronological order lending a sense of structure to the interview whilst still allowing flexibility and fluidity for responses to overlap and for participants to enlarge on areas of significance. Having a set of themes to work around assisted me in limiting my

input in the interview and kept the participant focus on the 'subject of inquiry'. As my participants were also practicing counsellors I felt it was important to foster the participants self-perception "*as a collaborator in the research process*" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.98) and to this end I spent a few minutes discussing this dynamic and building rapport. I exchanged consent forms (Appendix 9), reminding participants of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and offered the pre-interview introduction (Appendix 10) to read. The audio interviews were 30-60 minutes duration and were transcribed and returned to the participants for amendments or deletions as requested prior to final approval for use of the data for analysis (Appendix 11).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

It is usual to amass a huge amount of data in qualitative research and it is the researcher's task to compile and offer some interpretation of the phenomenon investigated, on which Rubin & Babbie (2007) describe "*as much art as science*". For this study I collated a total of 5.25:08 audio minutes, which transcribed to text of 47,348k words. I used an inductive approach, characteristic of qualitative data analysis where, unlike in deductive methods, the hypotheses and variables are neither generated '*a priori*' nor pre-determined (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994) but emerge from the data and are subject to change, necessitating a degree of creativity and flexibility from the researcher (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The constant comparative method as a means for processing the data alongside researcher epoche "*without prejudgment or imposing meaning too soon*" (Katz, 1987, p.36) aided the emergence of themes and categories by participants' substantiation rather than by researcher pre-determination. However, the inductive approach does

require some selection and interpretation of the data and inevitably the 'self' of the researcher is involved with this. In this study I attempt to describe my understanding of what has been shared by the individual participants whilst also reconstructing the data into a "*recognisable reality*" (Belensky et al 1992). McLeod (1999) describes qualitative data analysis as cyclical in nature requiring researcher, immersion, gestation, planning, data collection, data analysis, writing up, dissemination of results, reflecting and revisiting. Drawing on this approach and utilising the 'constant comparative method' (Figure 1) for analysis, I processed the data as follows:



Figure 1: Constant comparative method of data analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994, p.135)

After conducting each interview I immediately began the lengthy process of transcribing: showing the text verbatim, with additional researcher comments in brackets. The transcription process is a powerful aid to immersion in the data (McLeod, 1999) allowing the researcher to listen, review, make sense of implicit and explicit meanings, leading to the “*sudden insights, “aha” experiences*” described by Strauss and Corbin, (1998). The transcripts were prepared to a specific format (Appendix 12), with wide margins for note making, page and line numbers added and printed onto different coloured paper to visually aid the analysis and identification of participants who were allocated a code letter A-H and a pseudonym beginning with that letter. Three copies were made: for audit, a working copy and one that would be divided into ‘units of meaning’ (Maykut & Moorhouse, 1994). The first stage involved deconstructing the material by listening, reflecting and making notes of any recurring words, phrases and topics expressed and adding these to a research discovery chart.

The second stage comprised segmenting the text into stand-alone, discrete, units of meaning, which Maykut & Moorhouse (1994) maintain must be understandable without “*additional information*” (p.128) excepting “*the researcher’s focus of inquiry*” (p.128). I systematically went through each transcript, ruling off and coding the units of meaning like so: TA3/22-24 = Transcript A, Page 3, Lines 22 to 24, and cutting and attaching them to index cards after which all eight transcripts produced 616 units of meaning. From my discovery chart I selected a prominent theme, which became my first provisional coding category. Working through the units of meaning the data was grouped into 43 provisional categories. Lincoln & Guba (1985: p.137)

warn that, “*the process of inductively deriving important meaning from the data requires tolerance for the initial ambiguousness of the lookalike/feel alike criteria*” and I spent many hours ‘sifting’ and ‘rearranging’ the data, attempting to bring order to the material, noting overlapping themes and ideas and also where units of meaning could be duplicated or add meaning to more than one category.

The third stage involved reconstructing the data to accurately represent the felt meaning of the original. This part of the process involved the exploration of relationships across the categories and the constant refinement of themes and patterns. Categories were grouped and in some cases subsumed by writing ‘rules of inclusion’ in order to distil the meaning within the category, identifying data to be excluded and leading to the development of 13 provisional themes with 51 sub categories, which were further strengthened and refined resulting in 5 main themes with 25 sub-categories.

3.7 VALIDITY & TRUSTWORTHINESS

In quantitative research validity is epitomised by the question “*are we measuring what we think we are measuring?*” (Kerlinger, 1973, p.456). In qualitative research however, the terms ‘*validity and reliability*’ are resisted to some extent in favour of “*trustworthiness and rigour*” (Given & Saumure, 2008). Guba (1981) posits four constructs that can assist in the verification of the trustworthiness of a study, which “*correspond to the criteria employed by the positivist investigator*” (Shenton, 2004).

- a) Credibility (in preference to internal validity)
- b) Transferability (in preference to external validity/generalisability)

- c) Dependability (in preference to reliability)
- d) Confirmability (in preference to objectivity)

In order to aid the credibility of my study I employed a process of 'member checks' (Lincoln & Guba 1985) inviting participants to check and verify the accuracy of their transcripts, promoting ongoing consent. I enhanced the transferability of the study by giving a full description of the research context and the underlying assumptions through means of a full literature review (Chapter 2) and the methods applied (Chapter 3). In terms of dependability and confirmability I have relied on researcher transparency and critical reflexivity (McLeod, 2003), being open and explicit about my expectations of the study and continuing to question my own processes throughout, checking that I am on track, avoiding 'over simplifications' (Denscombe, 2003) and recognising and stating explicitly where the 'self' has been an influence.

And finally, Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that building an audit trail is vital to justifying the validity and trustworthiness of a study. For this study I have kept the original transcripts, consent forms, a log of the analysis process (Appendix 13), including discovery charts and the inductive category coding, the outcomes data (Appendix 14) and a journal (Appendix 15), all of which chart my process from my initial ideas and proposal through to the final research findings.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before starting research Bond (2004) recommends consultation with someone who is both independent and competent to identify and aid the risk management for participants. I consulted at length with my University of

Chester research methods tutor throughout the writing of my proposal, taking time to investigate ethical areas as advised before proceeding with my formal submission to and approval from the Ethics Committee of the University of Chester's Department of Social and Communication Studies. The University of Chester's 'Research Governance Handbook' advises that "*Research should be undertaken in accordance with commonly agreed standards of good practice*", such as exist in the Declaration of Helsinki for the conduct of clinical research, which cites important factors for ethical consideration: beneficence, non-maleficence, informed consent and confidentiality. These factors are firmly echoed in the *BACP's Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling & Psychotherapy* (2013) and affirmed by the *Ethical Guidelines for Researching Counselling and Psychotherapy* (Bond 2004) which encourages members to "*support and actively participate*" in research work to the benefit of the profession. As a counselling practitioner and full member of the BACP I am firmly committed to sound ethical practice and deem the values, principles and personal moral qualities enmeshed in the ethical framework for counsellors as fully transferable to researchers. In terms of beneficence the study adds to the body of research that benefits the profession as a whole, giving participants an opportunity to contribute to the debate for which several expressed an appreciation. Non-maleficence is concerned with not causing harm to the participant by managing the risks of the research (Bond, 2004) in particular the data collection process, for which Dallos and Vetere (2005) say counsellors bring valuable skills and sensitivity. To address risk, I explained the aims and rationale for the study to the participants and gave an estimate of their expected input. I considered the risks of the material raising sensitive issues and attempted through the use of

my semi-structured interview to lead the participant from general views and opinions into more sensitive areas reminding them to take a break as required. I offered an interview de-brief and restated the participants right to withdraw from the study at any time without need for explanation or fear of reprisal (Elmes, Kantowitz & Rosediger, 2003). Drew, Hardman and Hosp (2007) remind us that 'informed consent' consists of three elements: capacity, information, and voluntariness. In fulfilment of gaining informed consent and guarding confidentiality I drew up a consent contract, which explicitly stated the participants right to "withdraw participation and personal material". As qualified counsellors my participants were 'capable' of consenting and as the study offered no financial incentive or inducements to attract involvement the participants contributed their time and opinions voluntarily. All of the participants viewed their full transcript and several gave clarification of points and amendments. I confirmed once again the use of pseudonyms and the exclusion of identifying material. I ensured that each participant had access to a supervisor and that this relationship was on going at the time of interview.

I confirmed that, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, provisions would be made with regard to the computer storage and processing of their personal information, including my methods of storing their data confidentially. My consent contract was explicit about the limits and accessibility of their data, which in this context is defined as the findings and analysis but not including the full transcripts. I advertised and selected participants unknown to me to avoid dual relationships and I addressed self-care throughout the study, using my clinical supervision to explore the personal impact of the study on

me and my research supervisor's expertise in guiding and directing me towards sound research practice.

3.9 LIMITATIONS

In order to address researchers limitations in terms of prior assumptions of the topic, Spinelli (2005) advocates that researchers “*make their assumptions as explicit as is feasible*”. To this end, I have declared my motivations for undertaking the study and stated where preconceptions may exist. Researcher inexperience is a limiting factor in this study and I compensated for this by working with my supervisor and reading a variety of texts on qualitative research. The small sample size (Denscombe, 2007) offered little potential for theoretical saturation (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and that the sample lacked ethnic and cultural variation, being limited to white, British, counsellors of both genders, between the ages of 41 to 71, restricted the array of perspectives and views from participants. Finally, a limiting factor for this specific study is found in the evolving, dynamic nature of the topic. The political and professional climate continues to develop, rendering the data outcomes time-limited and frozen in time. On the one hand this presents the opportunity for a longitudinal study, on the other hand causes the study to be ‘out of date’ from the moment it is presented. In addition to this, the writing up of the research is taking place in 2013 due to personal constrictions in the researcher's life on which Swetnam and Swetnam (2009) say is “*almost by definition*” (p.2) a predicament of the mature student. This adds a further challenge to the researcher, holding true to the outcomes of the study, with knowledge of more recent advancements in the political and professional environment on which I talk more in the Epilogue (Appendix 1).

CHAPTER FOUR RESEARCH OUTCOMES

From an analysis of the data, 5 main themes and 25 sub-categories emerged as shown in Table 3:

SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

THEME	SUB-CATEGORIES
1.0 Motivation to become a counsellor.	1.1 Major life transition. 1.2 Continuing personal and professional development. 1.3 Giving something back. 1.4 Feeling unfulfilled, looking for something. 1.5 Experiencing counselling as a client. 1.6 Being the right type of person.
2.0 Counsellors' training experiences.	2.1 Satisfaction with early training. 2.2 Negative views of Diploma training. 2.3 Tutors as models and emotional caregivers. 2.4 Lasting impressions of training experience.
3.0 Counsellors' volunteering and employment.	3.1 Obtaining "poor" placements. 3.2 Positive experiences of primary placement. 3.3 Expectations of employment opportunities. 3.4 Payment and attitude to money. 3.5 Self-value and the value of the profession.
4.0 Counsellor Professional body and accreditation.	4.1 Membership and accreditation. 4.2 Level of interaction with professional body. 4.3 Expectations of their professional body.
5.0 Counsellor knowledge of and engagement with political change.	5.1 Ambiguity around statutory regulation. 5.2 Positive views of statutory regulation 5.3 The impact of political change on training. 5.4 The BACP's role during political change. 5.5. The impact on organisations. 5.6 IAPT's opportunities and client work. 5.7 The future of counselling.

Table 3

Key to theme codes and symbols:

T = Transcript
A = Participant pseudonym
1/ = Page number
1-2 = Line number/s

Example: TA1/1-2 = Transcript of Participant A, Page 1, Lines 1 to 2

... = Participant pause
(...) = Parts of quotation omitted

THEME 1 - MOTIVATION TO BECOME A COUNSELLOR

1.1 Major life transition was cited as a factor by participants, A, B, D, E, and G in the decision to become counsellors.

A and D were made redundant.

Well the despair that I felt, (...) after being made redundant. TD4/9-12

B was considering taking early retirement.

It was a big commitment for me (counselling training) and I thought do I really....? 'Cause I'm not a spring chicken you know. TB3/4-6

1.2 Continuing personal and professional development was a major factor and participants A, B, C, D, E, F and H chose counselling as they had an interest in the subject, people, and psychology.

D was seeking to broaden her professional skills to embark on a new career.

Having taken stock of my situation, I then put myself on all sorts of courses at college and one of them was the 'introductory to counselling'. TD4/16-20

E along with C and H wanted to learn more about 'self' and 'people'.

I'm fascinated by people. TC14/20-21

It was all about personal development, for me as an individual. TE2/1-9

My interest in people (...)...I'd always enjoyed talking with people. TH1/20-22

C and H, along with A and B, also had an interest in the subject of counselling.

To understand, what was the difference between mentoring, (...) coaching, what was counselling really? TC2/12-17

I'd like to explore more and find out (...) what counselling was all about. TH1/22-24

1.3 Three participants A, C and D, expressed their desire to help or give something back.

I'd just like to give something back... to the society I live in really. TC6/8-9

1.4 Participants A, B and E expressed the feeling of something being missing, not fitting, or needing something more fulfilling.

One of things that was making me unhappy at work, was that I felt that I was playing a role, I didn't fit in. (...) it somehow seemed false. TA1/24-30

They had certain work ethics that I didn't agree with and I spent a couple of years trying to... help me see it in a different way and, it was never, (...) to my liking, (...) because of the shift in me really, so I left. TE7/1-6

1.5 Three participants mentioned experiencing counselling as a client but only B expressed it as a motivating factor to becoming a counsellor.

This person who I'd never met before, never seen before just, just seemed to.... accept me and listen. It was as if somebody, for the first time in my life, was actually listening to me. TB1/22-34

1.6 Participants A, B, C, D E, G and H thought they were the right type of person to be a counsellor, a self-concept that was either bolstered by their previous professional status or through validation from others.

Participant A and C had professional roles overseeing others.

As a manager people would tend to come through my door and would look for advice. TA1/35-36

I (...) buddy people into the organisation and give them access to my network. TC2/1-4

A and B received validation from colleagues of their capacity for emotional support.

I do remember one of the guys, (...), saying (...) "I looked for you (...) that night (...)" "but you'd gone". (...) "I think that if I'd come in and I'd spoken to you, I wouldn't have gone off ill". TA2/1-8

I had a young boy working with me (...) he said, "You know, you want to carry on with that counselling" (...) "you'd be good." TB2/20-29

E and G had received more general validation about their approachability and being a 'good listener'.

People talked to me at bus stops and things like that. TE1/23-26

People always tended to come to me with their issues (...) I was just a good listener. TG1/22-3

THEME 2 – COUNSELLORS' TRAINING EXPERIENCE

2.1 Participants universally expressed their satisfaction and enjoyment with their early training Concepts and Skills courses - Level's 2 and 3.

Counselling Concepts Course

I thoroughly enjoyed it. TB2/8

I absolutely loved it never looked back. TC2/17-20

It did spark my interest definitely. TD4/23-31

Skills Certificate Course

It was just ...amazing (...) a real (...) liberation for me. TB3/13-25

Fantastic tutor, nothing was too much trouble for her. TH2/23-28

2.2. Participants perceptions of their (Advanced) Diploma training at Level 4 and 5 were mixed and more negative opinions emerged.

B, C, F and H all related how demanding the volume and variety of work was.

We had to find placements, (...) a supervisor, (...) our own personal therapist, (...) there was a lot to contend with (...) three assignments back to back, within a very short space of time. TB4/20-23

You pack so much into one day a week, and it was really intense. And they have the away days, and they had the residential. TF3/24-27

B, C, D, E and G expressed a lack of academic support and felt overwhelmed and isolated at times.

As the course went on there was less input from (...) the tutors. TC2/30-31

And I think we, a lot of us, felt we were floundering. TD6/3-4

We were really left to fend for ourselves. TG2/13-17

C and D felt that the subject could have been covered more broadly.

We maybe could have done a lot more...theory TC15/1-12

I felt they could have (...) used an awful lot more methodologies than they did. TD6/6-12

Whilst E, F, and G struggled with the degree of academic difficulty.

A wake-up shock call ... the standard of work that you had to do. TF3/1-8

We studied so many different erm psychologies (...) I found it quite hard to digest. TH4/6-8

B, C and D found the educational establishments were disorganised and had weak communication and administration.

The administration and organisation lacked...substance really. TC3/27-33

I just didn't feel as if they furnished us with sufficient information. TD5/15-22

D and G expressed dismay at their discovery they weren't on an accredited course.

I thought it was a bit dishonest of them really. TD16/11-22

I wouldn't have touched the course (...) I don't know when it was that it no longer became accredited. TG10/15-20

A, B, C, E conveyed their surprise at the increased level of autonomous working, but acknowledged that it was perhaps to be expected at this level.

We had to...go and research information, we had to go and find information, TB4/11-18

When you start doing research (...), maybe you realise that no, you probably need to go out and find it yourself TC3/4-8

We were (...) encouraged to work, autonomously.

TE2/27-33

2.3 Participants had high expectations of tutors as emotional caretakers for the personal development part of the course.

B and D described how the emotional demands of the course took its toll on the group.

I think, there was a few of us that nearly crumbled (...) we just found it too, too, demanding really. We got through it but it took a lot out of us.

TB5/ 25-27

People were very much on the edge and I was trying to encourage and motivate people to stick with it, stick with it. ... and I don't know whether some actually did walk.

TD8/1-4

C expressed concern that this wasn't managed well by the tutors.

If they create a situation, (...), they must offer support. Some people are very, very, upset; I do feel it's their responsibility, you know, to put them back together again really. And I didn't see a lot of that.

TC3/11-22

D and E commented on their tutor's emotional detachment and inexperience.

She herself was only just qualifying as a teacher... and she was nice but vague.

TD5/32-34

She was quite... detached from the, from the group. I don't know whether that's the norm, I don't know whether that's what you should do as a counselling tutor.

TE2/22-26

A was surprised at how the tutors personal issues affected their work.

Perhaps I expected too much from them. (...) I found it a bit surprising that my tutors' issues had the degree of influence they did.

TA8/7-12

2.4 Participants C, D, E, G and H lasting impressions of their training experience were negative overall.

I would say the diploma was different. I would say that's where the college fell down massively.

TD5/13-15

I would not recommend where I trained at all.

TG2/10-17

Participants A and B were mildly approving.

I look back now, now I've passed! (...) It was, (...) quite a good experience.
TB5/1-3

Participant F was more effusive with her praise.

I'd recommend it to anybody. TF3/13-16

THEME 3 – COUNSELLORS VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

3.1 Participants conveyed their struggle to obtain “good” placements and conveyed experiences of placements that were unprofessional, with unsafe practice and working conditions and breaches of the BACP ethical framework.

C, D and E struggled to secure a placement.

And it is tough to get placements; it was very, very, tough. TC4/25-28

It was a struggle to find one, (...) I mithered them to death, to give me a chance. TE3/21-26

C, G and H talked of unprofessional and unsafe practice.

It became (...) a professional issue, an ethical issue. (...) The organisation was very, very, poor (...) so much so I considered reporting the agency to the BACP. TC4/6-20

They haven't got an ethical framework for counselling and twice I've had to write to them. TH7/1-8

D and E were lone working.

I was actually counselling people alone in the entire place, which I thought was really poor practice (...) unsafe practice you know if anything had happened. TD9/22-33

C and D felt the management of clients was unprofessional

To set something up like that (...) dealing with people who have got really, really, massive needs, and leaving them without any mechanism, (...) to continue with what they needed; I just...I found that almost unforgivable really. TC5/3-11

I have actually sent clients home on the doorstep. (...) It's unprofessional, stood on the doorstep with a client, trying to beg her to come and open the centre. TD9/10-20

3.2 When participants found “good” placements their views were universally positive citing good professional practice, boundaries being as expected and training and networking opportunities as excellent.

All participants found placements to be very professional.

Extremely professional, well organised. TA5/7-8

The boundaries were in place; everything was done as it should be done. TF5/6-14

D, F, G and H appreciated the emotional support provided by their placements.

They were lovely, very supportive, very instructive. TD8/16-22

It was so warm and (...) so friendly and I felt at ease and that I was OK. TF4/15-18

I was never judged, there was no right or wrong in what I was doing. TG3/ 29-34

A, B, C, and F reported good CPD alongside the opportunity to network with other professionals.

They had an excellent induction process. TA5/9

I was meeting other counsellors and (...) sharing their professionalism (...) it was really rewarding (...) I felt accepted, (...) part of the team. TB7/21-25

So, I started off, you know, like a tiny seed, and I've just grown. TF4/19-24

3.3 Participants A, E, F and G anticipated getting paid work on completion of their training on which E and G thought would be reasonably easy.

I had a fantastic imagination (...) I thought I was going to walk into a job and everyone would embrace me and say: “Oh yes we want you!” TE6/10-16

Yes oh absolutely, no bother at all.

TG7/13

A, B and C didn't think that jobs would be available.

Counselling jobs are few and far between.

TA9/3-4

There are very few paid opportunities out there really,

TB10/27-28

3.4 Participants gave their views on counsellors being paid or working unpaid in the profession and the impact that has on them and their client work.

A, B and E thought qualified counsellors should be paid.

Yes, like any profession, I think people should be paid for it.

TA11/26-27

You can't expect...erm, counsellors to work for nothing really.

TB13/3-5

Well the truth is... you know I'd rather be paid for my services, 'cause I think actually, I should be paid.

TE7/29-30

F, G and H expressed frustration and resentment at the expectation of qualified counsellors continuing to work unpaid.

I feel as if "no...I need to.... start earning a living" (...) start getting some money for the work that I do in counselling.

TF10/1-3

I like to put something back into society, but also I need to earn a living.

TH9/8-12

A, C, E and F thought that being paid wouldn't have any impact on their practice or client-counsellor relationship.

Whether people can pay or not doesn't affect (...) my input into it.

TA16/22-24

The client and myself's relationship comes before money...

TE10/27-34

A and F pondered how they would feel about taking money directly from client in private practice.

I feel quite strange about somebody giving me some money.

TF11/23-28

A and B considered payments from clients to be acceptable through their voluntary organisations if they could afford it.

A small number of people did make a contribution at the end of the counselling. TA11/5-6

If the individual feels he can contribute and make a payment then all very well and good. TB12/29-31

A, B and D expressed concerns for those clients who might not be able to afford to pay for counselling in the future, if required to do so due to government cut-backs.

The affect would be most on those who wanted counselling and couldn't have it, because they couldn't afford to pay for it. TA16/19-21

A lot of the time, people who need it, you know, quite often not able to pay for it are they? TD13/1-4

C, E and G talked about the financial impact on them of DNA's.

It would take me two hours travelling there and back at my expense, and to not have the client would be really annoying. TG8/1-9

E conceded that this impacted less on her when she was at her paid job.

I do feel quite irritated (...) but hey, I've been paid, I'm there, I haven't made a journey. TE10/1-6

3.5 Participants B, E and F expressed sadness at their perceptions of themselves and their profession as being undervalued by both the public and other health professionals.

It really offends me that people (...) don't see the value in it. (...) I feel very... well saddened by that. TE9/13-36

And it's not about money, 'cause I'm not a money person, erm but I just feel like I want to be valued for what I do. TF18/8-10

B and E also felt that the profession as a whole was undervalued.

I feel as if the counselling profession is undervalued. There are so many counsellors out there that are working voluntarily and (...) I think the general public don't appreciate that.
TB13/5-9

I used to volunteer for a GP surgery (...) they were quite derogatory about counselling (...) I soon learnt quickly that counselling was quite (...) disregarded by a lot of people.
TE5/3-10

THEME 4 - COUNSELLOR PROFESSIONAL BODY AND ACCREDITATION

4.1 All of the participants are current members of the BACP and joined as students on the recommendation of their training organisation.

A and F cited their reason for joining as a 'requirement to practice'.

First and foremost it is a requirement to practice, to do voluntary work, to have a placement, to be a member of the BACP.
TA17/4-8

A, E, F and G mentioned wanting to achieve accreditation.

I have started doing my accreditation.
TE12/12-15

I've been working towards accreditation.
TG6/6-8

4.2 Participants A, B, C, D, F and G reported little or no interaction with their professional body other than to receive and read the monthly magazine 'Therapy Today'.

I seldom have any interaction with the ... I mean I get the monthly magazine...
TB15/12-14

I've never had any interaction with them. Therapy Today, I get that every month, and er it's interesting, reading through the articles (...) looking for jobs (...) the different training courses.
TF13/22-31

I don't have (...) dealings with them actually, apart from renewing my membership.
TG9/16-17

4.3 Participants A, B, C, E, F and Gs' expectations of their professional body were, to deal with general enquires, set and monitor ethical standards and offer support in litigation cases.

C E and G reported having made telephone enquires with the BACP.

If I feel stuck, (...) I ring them up; you never get a straight answer. I don't want to sound too negative (...) but (...) any questions you ask the answers come back very vague.
TE12/1-12

Participant A's perception of the BACP's function was to set and monitor ethical standards.

Its fine for setting ethical values, its fine for monitoring what I do, and if somebody makes a complaint.... drawing you to account on this.
TA18/9-11

B and F felt that the BACP would offer support to the counsellor in both ethical or litigation cases.

If there is a problem with malpractice, (...) I like to think that I'll get the support erm....erm...of a professional organisation.
TB15/6-33

B and D had started to question their reasons for membership and the prohibitive costs.

I mean (...) £135 quid it's a fair amount of money to pay. And I have in recent times been thinking well, (...) do I need to pay this?
TB15/6-33

Participant F expressed a feeling of disconnect with the BACP.

I just feel like (...) they're a million miles away from...working as a counsellor.
TF14/18-26

THEME 5 - COUNSELLOR KNOWLEDGE OF AND ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICAL CHANGE

5.1 Participants B, D, E and F expressed uncertainly, confusion, unfairness and frustration at 'not knowing' what the impact of regulation might have on them and the future of the counselling profession.

B felt uncertain about what impact regulation might have on the profession.

There's a lot of uncertainty that's crept into the profession, there's a loss of direction, we feel directionless in certain ways.
TB11/4-6

E thought that counsellors might have further obligations to fulfil in order to practice and felt it unfair.

I've just done (...) nearly four years of training and now you're asking me to do something else? And if I don't do it, then I can't work, as a counsellor?" So there's an unfairness to that. TE13/14-19

F expressed her lack of understanding and questioned why things were being changed.

Health Professional Council is it? (...) I don't really understand it all and I'm thinking, "Why are they changing it all?" TF15/5-17

C, F and H acknowledged that political discussions about Regulation were still taking place and were taking a 'wait and see' approach.

Nothings set in stone at the moment I'm just going with what is. TF17/21-26

With the change of government it might be put on hold. TH11/19-25

5.2 Participants A, C, E and F thought that statutory regulation for counsellors may offer protection to the general public and were happy to be audited and accountable for their work.

I had a professional qualification (...) so I was used to that sort of regulation, that need to focus your mind on the protection really of people, on ethical working and so on and so forth. TA6/206

I want to make sure I'm doing everything professionally; I'm very open about what I do, particularly with it being with people (...) who are very, very vulnerable. I've got no problem, I'm happy to be, audited (...) or inspected or...no problem with that at all. TC11/1-6

It'll be regulated and counsellors will ... have to work ethically and they will have to continue their personal development and erm I don't think that's a bad thing. TE13/1-9

And vulnerable people, clients, you know just think, "Oh, there's a counsellor advertised, I'll go see a counsellor" and they're not knowing that they're accredited or you know erm qualified or whatever. TF16/1-7

E and F thought that regulation might improve the 'quality' of counselling provision to clients by losing less "committed" counsellors from the profession.

It will, wheedle out people who aren't really fully committed to the counselling profession. (...) TE12/26-32

It'll get all the ones, out the way that, (...) people that are not qualified erm they won't stand a chance erm under the new regulation. TF16/1-7

F specifically cited 'protection of title' as a benefit.

It'll be really good in one way, because it really annoys me that anybody can call themselves a counsellor or psychotherapist. TF15/28-32

D expressed fears around regulation cost.

My fears would be that it becomes so overregulated and so expensive (...) I won't be able to afford to carry on. TD17/3-15

5.3 Participants B, G and H felt that government changes, but particularly regulation, would impact on counsellor training and qualifications.

It's throwing the whole world of counselling into turmoil, because everything has to be restructured, training and... TB17/30-33

I think they want everyone to do Masters Degrees or something, and they're not going to recognise current qualifications. That could be wrong.

TG10/27-30

5.4 Participants A, B, D and G felt reliant on the BACP to keep them informed about regulation, guide them and engage with the politics and discussions on their behalf of the profession.

D felt uninformed.

They should be making it really, really, really, obvious, (...) hit me in the face...and say look, take notice of this, this is what's happening.

TD19/14-22

G acknowledged receiving something from the BACP but felt a lack of engagement with it.

They've sent something through, but I haven't paid a lot of attention to it because (...), "I can't change, what I've done, to get to where I am"

TG11/4-8

Participant A expressed gratitude that the BACP were engaging with political debate with the government on behalf of members.

It is necessary to have some part of the professional organisation getting into the politics (...) I'm grateful that somebody's doing that. TA19/4-15

A and B were aware of discussions taking place about the role of a counsellor and the role of a psychotherapist.

There's moves afoot for, (...) re-evaluating what the counsellor does, ...what a psychotherapist does and the difference to that. TB10/24-32

F and G thought that accreditation with the BACP might shield them from any negative impact of regulation but were uncertain if this was the case.

I'm just hoping that by becoming an accredited member it's going to be enough. TG11/4-8

E and F thought that counsellors had to be accredited in order to gain entry onto the statutory register.

I need to do that (...) to become accredited so I can become regulated. TE14/3-10

If the HPC takes over (...) and you're not accredited they don't want to know you, so it's really important. TF15/5-17

5.5 Participants talked about the impact of government changes on their working environments, both volunteering and employment.

Participants A, B and D's current organisations have recently been impacted by reduced or loss of government funding.

The senior manager was putting a bid in to provide counselling services for the primary care trust. And it was all very optimistic because we thought, well to be honest; we thought we'd get it. We really did. (...) We didn't get it! TB16/9-20

B and D had experienced the reduction of voluntary counsellors or redundancy of paid counsellors from their teams.

There was a team of eight counsellors, well that's just gone, that's finished, (...) and it's very, very sad. TB18/29-33

They've stopped counselling (...) apart from one day a week. (...) There was forty-odd counsellors there and only eight of us have been given a position.
TD11/28-31

A and B's agencies were discussing raising funds from asking clients for payment.

They actually started putting up signs saying, "If you want to contribute, you can" for the clients.
TA10/26-32

A, B and F expressed their fears of potentially fewer job opportunities in the future for counsellors.

My fear is, that the jobs are not going to be there.
TF19/3-5

B, D and E have had job offers made to them, although not necessarily in the type of role they would have wished for.

I've been given an opportunity (...) with (...) group therapy (...) my manager has effectively offered me a (...) paid post (...) which is exceptionally lucky.
TB21/1-8

My supervisor's also asked me about working some temporary work for her doing telephone assessment stuff.
TD12/1-3

I thought, if I don't get my feet under the table, and if I don't get myself a paid counselling job, and get the experience, then nobody's going to want me anyway.
TE8/1-15

5.6 Participants universally talked about the impact of IAPT on their work opportunities, their perceptions of CBT and the changes they were already experiencing to their client work.

A and C thought that IAPT would bring more work opportunities for counsellors within the NHS.

It may help me get a job because they are going to pay counsellors less, I hear, potentially, so I could get a job.
TA19/25-28

My supervisor works for the NHS and she was saying (...) there does seem to be more work promised within the NHS.
TC7/3-12

C thought that opportunities would be available in the NHS for counsellors to train in CBT.

CBT I think, that's what my supervisors alluded to actually that this is coming up, and there will be opportunities. TC11/6-7

Participant G thought that unless you were prior trained in CBT you couldn't apply to the NHS.

The way the NHS has gone now, unless you're CBT trained, they don't want to know. TG7/1-2

H had sourced her own CBT training in preparation for the changes in the NHS, but was still uncertain of the entry criteria for posts.

I've just finished a CBT course and (...) the (...) tutor (...) he was telling us about it and, (...) you're going to have to have at least Level 5. TH11/15-19

Hs' own research led her to believe that Level 7 would be required.

They're looking at level 7 aren't they as being the lowest, I think? TH11/25-26

E had noted that jobs in the NHS now asked for counsellors to be accredited.

When I've seen a job it says 'accredited'. It used to say working towards accreditation. TE13/29-33

G had applied to IAPT and been rejected as a High-Intensity Therapist.

What's really annoyed me is the fact that I can apply for a job with no experience at all; go in as a low level therapist, after a year of learning CBT. TG11/18-26

B and G had mildly negative views about CBT.

One size doesn't fit all. And CBT doesn't always fit. TB11/6-25

But again, it's the quick fix. (CBT) TG12/16

B and D had recently been directed to change to time-limited contracts.

Person-centred counselling, although it's supposed to be short to medium term, (...) can often run; I mean I've had clients 40 sessions. TB17/7-11

We're going to eight-week erm contracts. (...) That's never happened before we've never had restrictions before. TD10/1-4

Participant A and E expressed their concerns about being asked to work with clients potentially beyond their skills level.

We're getting more and more clients that have... enduring... mental illness. Some with psychosis (...), paranoid schizophrenia, and I found this type of client exceedingly (...) demanding on me. TB10/10-17

I didn't really want to do it, I felt frightened to do it, because of the nature of the clients that you're working with. TE8/8-28

5.7 Participants A, B, D, E, F and G expressed their fears and doubts about the future of counselling and their ability to continue financially subsidising their counselling work.

I've spent I've spent a fair amount of money on this, a heck of a lot of time on this, I've gone through an awful of a lot of pain with this, (...) and in some ways heaven help me...I don't know who it's legitimate to! TA9/23-25

I feel resentful, 'cause you spend so long at college, and it's not cheap either, (...) and trying to make back your money or even earn a living in the profession is extremely hard. TG6/31-35

4.6 SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES

From the findings five proposition statements were constructed (Table 4), the implications of which are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The complete Breakdown of outcomes is shown in Table 5.

	Propositional Statements
1.	Participants navigate complex emotions transitioning from preceding professional frameworks to a person-centred ideology.
2.	Participants aspire to mutually collaborative and transparent relationships from end-to-end with their training organisations.
3.	Participants need explicit and clearly defined contractual boundaries for accessing the varied supports that connect their entire professional environment.
4.	Participants' perceptions of their employment prospects and future counselling career were bleak.
5.	Participants speculated the effect of statutory regulation would elevate the status of the counselling profession, improve employment prospects and offer protection to the public.

Table 4

	BREAKDOWN OF OUTCOMES								
1.0	Motivation To Become A Counsellor.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.1	Major life transition.								
1.2	Personal and professional development.								
1.3	Giving something back.								
1.4	Unfulfilled, something missing, being drawn to counselling.								
1.5	Experiencing counselling as a client.								
1.6	Being the right type of person.								
	- Validation from others of being the right type of person.								
2.0	Counsellors' Training Experiences.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
2.1	Satisfaction with Levels 2 and 3 Certificate training.								
2.2	Satisfaction with Levels 5 and 5 Diploma training.								
	- Volume and variety of work demanding.								
	- Felt overwhelmed and isolated.								
	- Subject could have been covered more broadly.								
	- Struggled in parts with degree of academic difficulty.								
	- College disorganised and lacked communication.								
	- Discontent that training course wasn't accredited.								
	- Autonomous working was a stressor in Diploma training.								
2.3	Expectation of tutors, their roles and boundaries.								
	- Emotional demands of the course were seen as high.								
	- Emotional demands not handled well by tutors.								
	- Tutors lack of emotional engagement and experience.								
	- Tutors personal issues impacting on their work.								
2.4	Relief and pleasure expressed by participants on graduation.								
	- Disappointment at the lack of celebration or ceremony								
3.0	Volunteering And Employment.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
3.1	Participants gave examples of poor placements.								
	- Struggled to get a placement.								
	- Examples given of unprofessional and unsafe practice.								
	- Examples of lone working.								
	- Client management by agency viewed as poor.								
3.2	Participants gave examples of good placements.								
	- Professional, boundaries as expected.								
	- Emotionally supportive and nurturing.								
	- Training and development opportunities given.								
	- Placements that didn't offer any CPD.								
	- Participants accessed their own training opportunities.								
3.3	Employment opportunities.								
	- Thought getting work would be reasonably easy.								
	- Wanted to work immediately following graduation.								

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	- Didn't think work would be available.								
	- Chose to continue as volunteers as had full-time jobs								
3.4	Views on Counsellors working paid or unpaid								
	- Thought that qualified counsellors should be paid.								
	- Frustration that counsellors expected to work unpaid.								
	- Money wouldn't impact on the therapeutic relationship.								
	- Uncomfortable taking payment directly from client.								
	- Clients payment fine if they can afford it.								
	- Expressed concerns for clients that can't afford it.								
	- Is (or would be) financially impacted by client DNAs.								
3.5	Valuing - Feels personally undervalued.								
	- Feels the profession as a whole is undervalued.								
4.0	Professional Body And Accreditation.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
4.1	Member of the BACP.								
	- Joined as a requirement to practice.								
	- Working towards accreditation.								
4.2	Level of interaction with professional body is minimal.								
4.3	BACP sets standards and supports litigation.								
	- Costs prohibitive for membership and training courses.								
5.0	Knowledge And Engagement With Political Change	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
5.1	Ambiguity around statutory regulation, lack of knowledge.								
	- Political discussions taking place, wait and see.								
5.2	Statutory Regulation offers protection to the public.								
	- Might improve the standard of counselling provision.								
	- Protection of title is a benefit.								
	- Costs might be prohibitive.								
5.3	Political change would impact on training.								
5.4	BACP should inform membership about regulation.								
	- Engage in political debate and protect titles for members.								
	- Accreditation would help them through regulation.								
	- Have to be Accredited in order to go on the register.								
5.5	The impact of political change on placements and jobs.								
	- Loss of funding to their organisation.								
	- Fear of fewer job opportunities.								
	- Job offers given but not in the roles they wanted.								
5.6	The impact of IAPT.								
	- Organisation may align with IAPT structure.								
	- IAPT might bring more job opportunities to counsellors.								
	- NHS wouldn't employ you unless you were CBT trained.								
	- Levels of entry to the NHS would be pegged.								
	- Negative view of CBT.								

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	- Time limited contracts with clients.								
	- Working with clients beyond skill level.								
5.7	The future.								
	-Fears and doubts about their future in counselling.								

Table 5

Key

	= Indicated
	= Not indicated
	= Positive
	= Neutral
	= Negative

CHAPTER FIVE DISCUSSION

This phenomenological study explored the impact of the evolving political and professional environment on graduate person-centred counsellors, drawing on the participants' personal experiences and perceptions of their industry. The chapter is arranged across five sections, as with prior chapters, illustrating the interlinked and overlapping nature of the discussion. The key to codes and symbols used in this chapter are as follows:

Key to codes and symbols:

- ... = Participant pause.
- (...) = Parts of quotation omitted.
- (3) = The number of participants that indicated the phenomena.

5.1 MOTIVATION TO BECOME A COUNSELLOR

This study corroborates the findings of previous studies evidence of 'five factors' in participants deciding to become counsellors (Buchan & Hughes, 2000; Banning, 2012; Richards, 2002). Major life transition (5), something 'missing' in their lives or of 'being drawn' to counselling (3) and personal and professional development (7). Three participants simply wanted to "give back" and whilst three participants mentioned experiencing counselling as a client (Buchanan & Hughes, 2000) only one expressed it as a motivating factor in becoming a counselor.

Participants' prior roles broadly fell under three headings: Sales, Training and Education (6) and the management and supervision of others had been a key part of their role (7). Participants placed the greatest emphasis on this factor, corroborating Bor & Palmer's (2002) and Wheeler's (2002) research showing that *background work experience* along with *personality characteristics* are

strong indicators to the type of person motivated to commencing counsellor training. Validation from others that they were they suited to the role with the emotional maturity (McCrea & Costa, 1986; Buchanan & Hughes, 2000), skills and personal qualities necessary to do the job (Rogers, 1957; McLeod 1992; Mearns, 1997; Wheeler, 2000), were also important and these dual reasons were cited by seven participants. Participants expressed having been held in high esteem in their prior roles, and this imbued them with the confidence and belief to embark on counselling training having been “*very well, (...) thought of, and respected*” (TE6/31-33). This was greatly at odds with the valuing they experienced during their training and participants struggled with the adaptation of their self-concept, which is discussed further in section two.

5.2 COUNSELLOR TRAINING EXPERIENCE

The entry profiles of students in this study, 75% female, 100% white, supports evidence about the range and diversity of trainees, conforming to the stereotypical middle class, well-educated, comfortably off (Coldridge & Mickelborough, 2003). Seven participants had followed an FE route and indicated the vital role the traditional 3-part vocational training route played in enabling them to decide as they went along if this was the right profession for them (Mearns, 1997).

In line with other studies (Hamilton & McKenzie, 2007; Banning, 2012) the participants’ enjoyment of early counsellor training is clearly illustrated (8), with sentiments expressed from “*interesting*” (TA4/2-7) through to “*fantastic*” (TH2/23-28). However, the results also show that participants are unprepared for all that counselling diploma training comprises, confirming previous

findings (Potter, 1997; Banning, 2012). Participants expressed discontent with their training organisations communication (3), information on course accreditation (2) and information about costs (4), on which one said: *“they should furnish you with the details at the start. I thought it was a bit dishonest of them really”* (TD16/18-22).

Participants found the volume and variety of work demanding (4), autonomous working a stressor (4) and overwhelmed and isolated (5), corroborating Truell's (2001) findings of students experiencing significant negativity during training (8). This stemmed mainly from the emotional demands of the course: *“we were getting pretty upset you know a lot of tears were getting shed”* (TB3/19-21) and the perception that tutors weren't handling this well. Mearns (1997) rationalises that the tutor-student relationship echoes the parent-child relationship and that this is exacerbated in counselling by the personal-development component of the course, which results in role and boundary confusion (Bennett, 2003). Students expect tutors to act as role models for the PC approach and also to demonstrate counselling skills. Tutors are concerned with regulating personal disclosure (2), maintaining academic boundaries and keeping the group emotionally contained and safe. On graduation, participants expressed relief and pleasure (4), a strong sense of achievement and with the exception of one participant, all felt suitably qualified and experienced for professional work.

5.3 COUNSELLORS' VOLUNTEERING AND EMPLOYMENT

In line with other studies (Milton, 2001; Banning, 2012) this study found participants struggling, among tough competition, for limited placements (3)

and their consequential acceptance of *any* offer made (Milton, 2001). Placements deduced to work unprofessionally or unethically (5) presented a challenging dilemma for participants who described practice as “*really poor*” (TD9/22), and on the client management of one agency “*unforgivable*” (TC5/9). Participants’ experiences of “good” placements however, were strongly positive (8), with professionalism and boundaries as expected (7), an emotionally supportive and nurturing environment (4), good CPD opportunities (4), integrated and treated as one of the team (4), good support networks (3) and excellent managerial supervision (3). The results strongly suggest that ‘the placement’ fills an experiential need and access to positive mentors (Skovholt & Ronnestad, 2003), adding to evidence of trainees needing a ‘variety of supports’ to transition successfully into a counselling career (Truett, 2001; Bennett, 2003; King, 2007).

Participants were asked about their working experience at the time of their interview. The study found five participants engaged in paid work, representing 62.5% of the total, lower than the BACP figures of 85% (2006), but broadly in line with all UK graduates entering a profession aligned to their subject 61.6% (DHLE, 2012). The range-of-hours worked were between 1 and 24 hours per week and participants expressed how difficult paid work had been to obtain (4). All participants except one have continued at their original primary placement voluntarily, bolstering Bondi et al’s (2003) assertions of this widespread practice. This study did not substantiate the view of Feltham and Horton (2012) that the limited number of job opportunities is an “open secret” in the profession. Participants experienced a dawning realisation and expressed disapproval at their educational establishment’s lack of

forthrightness about this (3). Counselling was something that they *would* like to make a living from (7), with only one participant committed to counselling strictly in a voluntary capacity (Bondi et al, 2003; Banning, 2012). The study drilled down into the participants' attitudes to money and many expressed the opinion that once counsellors had qualified they should be paid (6). Two had more neutral views saying, "*it doesn't make you less of a counsellor if you're not paid.*" Participants expressed frustration at the 'expectation' that counsellors would work unpaid (3) and felt personally undervalued because of this (3). They expressed further sadness at their interpretation of the 'whole' profession being undervalued (2). When asked how payment might impact the therapeutic relationship, participants said their practice would not change (4), they felt uncomfortable taking money directly from clients (2) whom they felt had an expectation of free counselling, a view that they largely agreed with. However, when clients 'did not attend' this impacted on them financially (3), and counsellor satisfaction levels dropped when it was perceived that clients did not value or appreciate their efforts (4).

Participants felt that *they* had given a lot to the profession in terms of time, money and personal commitment (8) and considered how they could continue: "*because if I'm not getting paid for it, (...) can I (...) keep giving up hours of my time at this expense?*" (TD17/6-10). Participants felt that they had been through an emotional ordeal over and above what is normally required in an educational course, laced with the perception of having been given little return in return (7). Participants' antipathy about this was directed at the profession at large: "*I did feel quite cheated by the whole thing*" (TE7/12-17). However, another countered that "*even if I don't get a job from it*

(...) *I have got so much more*" (TA10/5-6), a sentiment echoed to some extent by all of the participants as they gave examples of what they were getting back from the profession. They talked about "*real value*" (TA20/1-2) and related this to their personal development and growth (6), their work with clients (5) and, in line with Buchanan & Hughes' study (2000), a spiritual value: "*It fills a part of me that nothing else does*" (TC14/6-8).

5.4 COUNSELLORS' PROFESSIONAL BODY AND ACCREDITATION

The participants in this study are members of the BACP (8) all of who joined on the recommendation of their educational establishment. None of the participants investigated the *need* to join, although two thought they '*had*' to join as a requirement to practice. The study asked the participants how much interaction they had with the BACP to which they replied "*little*" (6) which led them to considering their reasons for membership. They cited the professional status inferred by membership (3) and the BACP code of ethics as reassuring for clients (2). Participants opinion on the BACPs rationale was to set standards and to support them "*if there is a problem with malpractice* (TB15/14-27) or in the case of litigation (6). However, participants that had contacted the BACP with regard to matters of ethics (3) reported dissatisfaction with the BACP response. The participants in this study were working towards accreditation (4) which, in line with King's (2007) study they ranked as "*really important*" (4). They suspected it might be an obligation of entry to the statutory register (2) and also thought it would help them gain employment (4) on which one participant said: "*When I've seen a job (...) It used to say working towards accreditation, but now it's saying accredited*" (TE13/29-33).

The current number of hours required to apply for accreditation is 450 and participants had kept on their voluntary work (7) in order to gain hours (6), corroborating Cowen's (2012) findings of limited graduate vacancies and that counselling agencies take advantage of this, specifying 'qualified', 'minimum 100 hours', 'working towards accreditation' for unpaid positions, which he posits is: "*so unhealthy for our profession and means that we are not valuing ourselves appropriately*" (Cowen, 2012).

5.5 COUNSELLORS' KNOWLEDGE OF AND ENGAGEMENT WITH POLITICAL CHANGE

House (2003) says that there has been uncritical acceptance of regulation as a fix-all 'tool' from many in the profession, an idea supported by the outcomes of this study (4). Whilst participants expressed considerable confusion and uncertainty about the changes (4), they also optimistically speculated in line with Rogers' (2010) study that "*it may be better*" (TF17/7-8), enhance public protection (3) and raise the status of profession (4). Participants were aware of the discussions around the protection of titles (3) with one participant citing this as a benefit, adding that at the moment, "*anybody can call themselves a counsellor*" (TF15/30), an argument Mark Seale, Chief Executive of HPC says is not going to go away: "*get kicked off the register, and you can call yourself a coach or, anything else*" (Samuels, 2009). He went on to plead the profession work together to catch and denounce anyone trying this on. Participants supported this (2) and hoped that overall regulation may improve the quality of counselling provision (2), but most importantly weed out the bad practitioners (4), an argument echoed strongly in the literature (Coe, 2009), but a notion firmly rejected by Maresfield (2009) who says that asking clients

to trust someone just because they are on a register might backfire. House (2003) agrees, asserting that there is absolutely no evidence that regulation improves quality or delivery of human services. The literature denounces the HPC for lack of consultation with counsellors and Michael Guthrie, Director of Policy and Standards for the HPC, confirmed that, "*asking therapists if they wanted to be regulated was not part of the remit*" (HPC, 2009). This study corroborates this finding, along with the resulting confusion felt by participants about the discussions (6). Participants were unclear of the impact that regulation might have and uncertain of the rationale for it saying, "*we feel directionless*" (TB11/5) and "*in limbo, it's not this but it's not that*" (TF17/6), a situation they wanted resolved so that they could respond accordingly, for which they expressed some trepidation (2): "*I fear us jumping through hoops unnecessarily*" (TE12/26). They were also worried about prohibitive costs and the cost of being in the counselling profession was cited as onerous in general (8). Participants feared the advent of regulation would precipitate the restructuring of training (3), professional membership (8) and accreditation (4). In addition they thought that qualifications to enter the profession would be higher. In spite of the angst and worry expressed, there were no direct oppositional voices to regulation or the HPC as regulator, supporting Musgrave's (2009) view that BACP membership remain ill informed on the arguments, preferring instead to get caught up in anecdotal rhetoric. This study found participants deliberately hadn't taken a stance (3), didn't want to form an opinion either way (2) and hadn't "*paid a lot of attention*" (TG11/5). One participant said he was "*grateful*" (TA19/11) that someone was looking at

the politics reflecting the hands off approach of all the participants who were waiting instruction from the BACP.

Whilst the news of significant financial investment in talking therapies (IAPT) was greeted with massive enthusiasm by the profession (Barden, 2008; Murphy, 2013), dawning realisation that humanistic models, thus the majority of counsellors, would not be represented in the treatment plans, resulted in disillusionment: *"I had read articles in the paper about (...) Gordon Brown was going to employ so many more counsellors etc... but (...) I've realised that it's all talk"* (TG7/5-9). This study shows a strong correlation between the introduction of IAPT and participants' organisations losing funding (3), counsellors' redundancies (2) and reduced counsellor delivery hours (2). Participants described changes to their work-place environments aligning with the IAPT stepped care model (2), felt pressured to work with clients beyond skill level (2), were given more complex case loads (2) and time-limited contracts (2). However, they supported their organisations work with some of the most vulnerable in society (4), and had achieved good therapeutic outcomes with these client groups (4). Some organisations discussed introducing client contribution (3) and participants expressed concern for clients that couldn't afford counselling (4) saying, *"it should be made available to those people who really need it"* (TB12/21-23).

Participants optimistically thought there might be opportunities to work in the NHS (2), either to train in CBT (1) or to take a lower level post (1). Others felt certain that the NHS wouldn't employ you unless you were prior CBT trained (2). Participants thought entry levels had already been pegged (3) perhaps

confusing this with the regulatory entry to register. One participant applied to IAPT at the higher level but was turned down and said: *“it goes against everything that I’ve done and achieved to just forget my current qualification and my work, to go in at a lower level”* (TG12/1-11). All were aware that CBT was the model of choice in the NHS, expressing mildly negative views (2) and sadness at the perceived rejection of the PC model (4). They were also gloomy at having to consider opportunities outside of counselling (3), fewer job opportunities (5) and not being able to get a job at all. Whilst the press was busy trumpeting IAPTs first million customers (2012) one participant said, *“all this talk about what’s available but you try to access the service... and it is so disappointing”* (TG13/6-9).

5.6 SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Motivations to be a counsellor were varied, but the study clearly indicates participants choosing a ‘new’ way of life or ‘way of being’. Few had expected the high levels of jurisdiction and bureaucracy involved in being in the profession. Their training experiences prepared them well theoretically and academically and the ‘nurturing placement’ did much to help them transition to professional counsellor. Participants were unaware at the outset of training of the job market or the likelihood of gaining employment as a counsellor, but were hopeful that statutory regulation would benefit the profession, securing professional status that merited access to opportunities in the NHS. In Chapter six I draw the conclusions to the study, make recommendations for practice and note areas for potential further research.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSIONS

From the research outcomes five propositional statements were drawn and are detailed below depicting the interlinked and overlapping nature of the discussion. Each statement is arranged showing the impact of the phenomena on the participants followed by suggestions for practice. Areas for further research are suggested in each of the propositional statements with the exception of three and four.

6.1 PROPOSITIONAL STATEMENTS

1. *Participants navigate complex emotions transitioning from preceding professional frameworks to a person-centred ideology.*

Impact: Participants describe conflicting emotions as they transit from their prior traditional roles, interpreted as aggressive, formal, authoritarian into the person-centred way of being, their ideology of choice, interpreted as passive, informal, liberal. The paradox for participants is that having concluded that they are the 'right type of person' with the 'necessary skills and qualities' to become a counsellor, their personal development work causes shifts to the self-concept. At this early stage of their training participants appear to detach from any political stance in deference to being non-judgmental, eschewing that which may threaten their fledging practice of the PC core conditions.

Practice: The diversity and equality, training module could include a stronger emphasis on politics, class and money, within a counselling context.

Research: Does Person-Centred practice equate to political passivity?

2. Participants aspire to mutually collaborative and transparent relationships from end-to-end with their training organisations.

Impact: Tension exists between the training organisation's objective to recruit a full cohort substantiating ongoing status, and applicants who have an expectation that training organisations give an honest, full and frank description of what is on offer. Applicants want a realistic portrayal of all that is required of them, in terms of academic level, time commitment and financial investment. Students felt kept in the dark and discovered things along the way. This lack of transparency was experienced as betraying and at odds with PC ideology. It also established an unhealthy perpetuating child-adult dynamic (Mearns, 1997).

Practice: An experiential recruitment workshop could be provided for students affording time for discussions about the training, structure, placement, supervision, books, costs and career opportunities. Discussions should be revisited throughout the course especially with regard to employment and career progression.

Research: As provision shifts from FE towards HE, what has been the impact on the range and diversity of students accessing counselling training?

3. Participants need explicit and clearly defined contractual boundaries for accessing the varied supports that connect their entire professional environment.

Impact: In spite of students having access to a range of supports, supervisors, personal counsellors, tutorial study and placements - their tutor becomes their primary resource focus, who, (limited by time or resources),

finds it difficult to service this unremitting obligation. Academic demands, autonomous working and emotional exposure, left participants feeling overwhelmed and isolated (Truell, 2001). Their placement did provide an additional source for students, offering emotional nourishment and role modelling. This study failed to take account of the role of the participants' clinical supervisor's role in their support network.

Practice: Supplementary teaching could be provided about the 'roles and remits' of the trainee counsellor's support network and advice given on accessing the appropriate support for the various parts of training. This can be challenging for students to both comprehend and navigate.

4. Participants' perceptions of their employment prospects and future counselling career were bleak.

Impact: Participants had little hope for full-time employment at the time of their interviews and were being impacted in their voluntary work by cutbacks, redundancies and reduced delivery hours. Their organisations were losing funding and the only jobs advertised were in IAPT for which they couldn't apply. Participants expressed despondency at the lack of job opportunities, anger at a system that expects them to continue to work unpaid and exasperation (although also some hope) that regulation may require even more from them in order to be able to work.

Practice: The BACP could actively engage with employers advising suitable grades for the vacancies advertised, thus creating graduate job routes?

5. Participants speculated the effect of statutory regulation would elevate the status of the counselling profession, improve employment prospects and offer protection to the public.

Impact: Whilst trepidation was expressed with regard to regulation, participants welcomed the perceived protection of clients, prescribed ethical practice for counsellors and title protection. They thought that statutory regulation would enhance their status as professionals and lead to greater job opportunities, with weak or unqualified counsellors weeded out of the profession. They thought BACP accreditation would afford them an automatic place on the register and protect them from further negative consequences of political change.

Practice: A complaints procedure, that offers one identifiable route for the public encompassing the diverse codes of practice across professions, could be developed.

Research: How do we both protect the public and allow practitioners to flourish?

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Appendix 1

EPILOGUE

It was at a weekend workshop during the final weeks of my counselling diploma, that a small group of us presented back our findings on our chosen research topic 'Depression'. My group nominated me to complete the final stage of the presentation, tasking me with finding the positive side of depression! Not only did this lead me to some really interesting findings, it also led me to Richard Layard's work around 'Happiness'¹ which naturally pointed towards his later paper reporting the effects of depression on people and society and highlighting the lack of therapists for patient demand. It was pleasing to be able to finish my presentation on a high note, intimating to a room of 30+ trainee counsellors that we may soon see an upsurge in counsellors vacancies, just as we were about to graduate. My optimism as it turned out was both premature and misplaced. Two years later I proposed this study to look at just what had happened with the Layard proposals and at how my fellow graduates had fared.

At the commencement of the study (2009) I was naturally aware of the IAPT programme and also that counsellors' hadn't been factored into the plans. I didn't have knowledge that the remit had excluded other Humanistic models and had only limited knowledge of the Government's proposals for the regulation of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. So there were many more shifts in the profession to explore.

As I started the study, I recalled my own journey through the profession, remembering my feelings of angst when I graduated about the burgeoning requirements for professionalism in counselling. I had really wanted to get a job in a counselling agency or the NHS as I had enjoyed such wonderful support, encouragement and learning in my placements. I would have sincerely loved to join an agency such as that. I applied to many jobs, but was rarely called for interview, and when I was lost out to more experienced practitioners. I was left with little other choice than to start my own private practice (agency).

This took enormous courage on my part and when I stopped to consider what it was that I was apprehensive about, I deduced that it was the professional and legal aspects. I was so concerned that I would commit some minor misdemeanour and end up struck off the BACP register that I tried to account for and log every part of my practice from the initial risk-assessments through to client contracting and case-notes. It was exhausting taking care of each and every professional obligation and as my agency grew to include other counsellors, so did the professional responsibilities. It was interesting to note that it wasn't the 'counselling' part of the counselling profession that concerned me, but the 'professional requirements' part.

¹ What is happiness? Are we getting happier? (2003). <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/events/lectures/layard/RL030303.pdf>

When the government became involved directly with the profession through their funding of IAPT and regulation compulsion, things appeared to get worse for a time. My participants reported a loss of funding to their agencies and this struck a raw nerve for me as I also personally lost a government funded agency contract, precipitating my need to give up my rented office and therapy space reverting to working from home as a solo enterprise. Counsellors were hit with a double-whammy as the UK recession took hold and many private practitioners reported losing client numbers. My own counselling diploma group with whom I've kept touch, reported being unable to continue with their counselling work, with one saying that she simply couldn't afford to pay for insurance, supervision, BACP membership, petrol and time, to service just two clients a week, one through her volunteering agency and one in her private practice. Just three (from twelve) of my diploma peers are still practicing, myself in full-time employment and the other two volunteering, having never had any paid work more than six years from graduation.

So to this end, the participants in my study confirmed that their experiences were similar to my own and their sentiments echoed mine, feeling as if they were in a profession that resembled a ship about to sink. BUT...they also helped me to understand what it was that kept counsellors in the profession. Why so many clung to the sinking ship and seemingly by sheer force of will kept it afloat. It was 'belief'. The strong belief that what they were doing was worthwhile. Helpful, needed something that had also helped them grow into a bigger, better, more self-actualised person. In spite of the paradoxical juxtaposition of 'person-centred practice' and the 'professional obligations' of professional body registration, regulation, insurance, CRB clearance, it appears that my participants like myself, will continue to "jump through hoops" and do whatever is required in order to, not only use the skills we have learnt to help others, but to also share our own experiences of our journey into self-awareness and as one participant put it "enlightenment".

It is nearing the end of 2013 as I write and my journal reveals occasions where I had to be away from this study for six months or more, which Swetnam and Swetnam (2009) say can be an extra consideration for mature students. I had to explain to my supervisor on more than one occasion that once again, "life had got in the way". I have tried to the best of my ability not to let myself off the hook because of what was happening in my life, but I think there is an addition to the argument here for 'counselling' students in that we spend much of our training and time considering our human relationships and the importance of them, concluding that they are the most important thing in our lives. Sometimes we have to put our significant others needs before our own and for me, if I had to forgo completing this study because of these life events, then whilst I would have felt incredibly disappointed, I would rationalise that whatever had taken my attention was clearly of maximum importance to me at the time. It can be the curse of the counsellor to be the person called upon in time of crisis and my personality is such that I want both, time and space... and also to be called upon! I did note at one point in my journal the need to let the people around me know just how important my

research work was to me and ask them to allow me the space and time to work (which I did) and this was respected, for which I am really grateful.

Choosing an evolving topic to study has proved a double-edged sword. On the one hand my interest has never waned in my study, as the topic has stayed fresh, with new publications continuously emerging and various points of view being added to the arguments. On the other hand, having a piece of work that has been 'fixed in a time period' and then not written up for some time detracted from its impact and immediacy. It also presented significant challenges in the writing up as I struggled to stay in the right 'tense' and keeping what I had learnt in the subsequent years outside of the arguments I was presenting.

And finally to bring the reader up to speed on regulation and IAPT: the new government quietly shelved plans for statutory regulation in 2010. They favoured a system of Accredited Voluntary Registers, which can be viewed at ² on which the BACP was the first of six psychological therapy professional bodies to have their register accredited ³. In order to be placed on this register counsellors had to be prior accredited or sit a Certificate of Proficiency test to prove competency, which was something I did earlier this year gaining my own personal entry onto the register. IAPT continues to thrive with the most recent developments including extending the service to Children and Young People. 4000 thousand therapists have been trained and another 2000 will be added to the workforce, 1k more than Layard originally planned to account for the additional services to Children and Young People. Their 3-Year Report (2012) IAPT trumpets the success of the programme and posits challenges ahead including the dramatic increase to the number of referrals they have received, creating large waiting lists, due to the success of the first phase. NHS jobs website is seeing a slight increase in vacancies advertised for counsellors and some NHS teams are diversifying practice to include a range of mental health professionals. ⁴

² <http://www.professionalstandards.org.uk/voluntary-registers>

³ <http://www.bacpregister.org.uk>

⁴ <http://www.iapt.nhs.uk/news/iapt-3-year-report--the-first-million-patients-november-2012-/>

Appendix 2

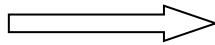
LITERATURE SEARCH

SOURCES

1. Library - University of Chester
2. Library - Edge Hill University – interlibrary (Sconal) system.
3. Electronic bibliographic databases to search for books and articles.
4. Journals and newspaper articles.
5. Websites of professional bodies.
6. Transcripts of speeches and commissioned research papers from government open sources.
7. Interviews with occupational professionals and representatives.

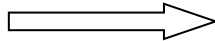
RESEARCH PLAN

1. Why are you doing the research?



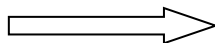
To explore graduate counsellors' experiences and perceptions of the evolving political and professional environment.

2. What are you searching for?



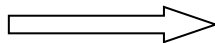
The impact on their professional development and employment prospects.

3. What are your constraints?



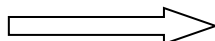
The topic is dynamic and evolving. Obtaining a sample.

4. What sources?



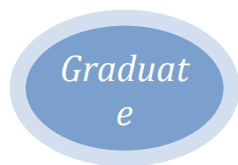
Library, electronic and paper journals, key speeches, professional body websites.

5. How comprehensive?



Small-scale study. 6-12 participants. Exploring personal perceptions of the evolving political climate.

I worked through this plan thinking about my strategy and approach using mind maps and ideas charts. My next task was to plan my literature review strategy and I met with a Chester University Librarian to gain additional practical skills and strategies for database searching. Utilising a search strategy exercise provided by Chester University I began by circling key words in my title. *A qualitative study of counsellors' experiences and perceptions of the evolving political and professional environment.*



I dismissed the words 'experience' and 'perceptions' as Brett and Grant (2003) advise that such words retrieve too many articles to be useful at this stage, but can be re-introduced when trying to hone a particular perspective on the topic. I then considered alternative key words; see table below.

Graduate	Counsellor	Professional
	Therapist	Political
	Practitioner	Environment
	Clinician	Climate
		Profession
		Employment
		Government

From the table we can see that there are many alternatives for 'counsellor' but I was unable to find (through the thesaurus) or to think of an adequate alternative description for 'graduate'. In considering the words 'political' and 'professional' I thought of climate and environment but discounted these two words in the main search as they changed the context completely and brought

up articles concerned with 'green policies'. I needed a link word between 'graduate counsellor' and 'political and professional' to make my search more relevant and focused and after much consideration added the word 'employment' and then in order to widen the lens 'government' and 'UK'.

SEARCH RESULTS

I started my search in the Chester Library databases using a string of terms as shown. I worked firstly through 'Psych Info' database, which proved to be a rich source of articles and books. In order to get the widest possible results I used brackets for each word linking them with 'and' which meant that articles would be scoured for any of the three key words in any order. I also added the asterisk * to give me the widest possible use of each word for example counsel* would bring back results for counsellor, counselor (USA), counselled, counselling, and *employment would also return *unemployment*.

1) (graduate*) and (counsel*) and (*employment)

Gave 362 results and by filtering on a date range of 1999-2009 I was able to reduce these to 134 from which I selected and saved 22 relevant papers.

2) (counsel*) and (government)

Also showed several hundred so I filtered this search by using a left-margin option menu, which guides to appropriate further filters. I chose from this menu 'government policy making' and again chose date range from 1999-2009, which returned 95 sources. I selected 15 articles from these and chose a second left-hand menu filter 'psychotherapy' from where I selected 9 further papers = 24 in total.

3) (UK) and (government) and (psychology)

Returned 205 papers, filtered date range 1999-2009 = 151

Side heading 'mental health services' = 19 papers to save.

Results using the same search terms were as follows:

IBSS

1) = 0 2) =94 - Selected 5 3) =13 - Selected 3

SOC INDEX

1) = 134 - Selected 0 2) =1982 - Selected 0 3) =183 - Selected 0

Web of Science and PubMed also returned non-relevant papers suggesting that I needed to re-word my search terms entirely in order to get positive results from these databases. My preliminary search returned a total of 93 sources, some of which I collated and saved in a Dissertation Resources file on my laptop and some in hard copy. Because of the contemporary nature of my study I put my search terms into the university database 'alerts' system and received email notifications as and when new publications were added.

REVIEW AND ADDITIONAL KEY SEARCH TERMS

I reviewed the online databases Cinahl Plus, PsycINFO, PsycARTICLES, PsycBOOKS and Psychology and Behavioural Sciences and new white papers and key speeches from conferences, government websites and professional body websites, most notably the BACP as and when they emerged.

Key search terms extended to include:

"Graduate" "Counsellor" "Therapist" "Practitioner" NOT "Counselor" or "Clinician" and combinations with the following: "Personality" AND "Type" "Traits" "Characteristics" "Education" "Training" AND "Concepts" "Skills" "Diploma" "Higher Education" "HE" "Further Education" "FE" "Trainee" "Volunteer" "Placement" "Profession/al/ism" "Professionalisation" "Industry" "Regulation" "IAPT" "Un/employment" "Jobs" "Vacancies" "Costs" "Price" "Value/ing."

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BROWSE ISSUES >

Participate in research

Research

How do the political and professional changes in counselling affect you? Person-centred counsellors sought for student research. Interviews by telephone or face to face. Contact Geraldine Johnson (Personal contact information removed.)

Appendix 4

EMAIL SENT TO ORGANISATIONS

(Personal details removed)

Date as postmark.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently undertaking a Masters Degree in Counselling Studies at the University of Chester. I have now reached the final stage of my programme, which requires me to undertake a small research project. My chosen area for research focuses on counsellors who graduated between 2005 and 2008 who are willing to share their personal experiences and perceptions of 'being' in a profession that is undergoing political and professional change.

I am interested to hear from counsellors who are: -

- Qualified and who graduated between 2005 – 2008
- Person-centred trained
- Have access to a supervisor

More about my project:

- As a member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy my research is conducted within their Ethical Framework and participants may withdraw from the study at any time.
- Participants will take part in a one to one recorded interview with me either face to face or via telephone, which will last about 45-50 minutes.
- The interview will be transcribed by a typist, appointed and contracted by me to maintain confidentiality. She will not be party to any personal information of the participants and she will not hold onto any part of the work written or taped. All information will be deleted or returned to me.
- Anonymity is assured throughout the project and participants may read the transcript of their interview before any of their comments are included in the dissertation.
- Upon completion of the assessment of the study, the transcript and tape will be erased or returned to the participant.
- My research supervisor is Tony Parnell who is a Senior Lecturer (Counselling) at the University of Chester.

I have attached a poster, which invites interested participants to contact me via telephone, email or my address; I would be very grateful if you would display this on your notice board. If you have any questions or queries regarding this research project please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you so much for your help.

Yours faithfully,

Geraldine Johnson

Person-Centred Counsellors

Did you graduate between 2005 and 2008?

How do the current changes in the counselling profession affect you?

- *Government regulation*
- *Work opportunities*
- *Training opportunities*
- *Professional bodies and accreditation*
- *Personal support and development*

Want to join the debate – put across your views?

M.A Counselling Student is seeking person-centred counsellors who graduated 2005-2008 who are willing to discuss the personal impact on them of the ongoing political and professional changes in the counselling arena.

Face to face or telephone interviews arranged as preferred - confidentiality and anonymity a top priority.

Interested participants please contact

Geraldine Johnson
Address
Email:
Tel:
Mobile:

Appendix 6

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE & AMENDMENTS

Original questionnaire shown and then actual questionnaire used after amendments, omissions and refinements.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

My project aims to explore the graduate counsellor's personal experience and perceptions of 'being' in a profession that is undergoing political and professional change.

1. Prior to training, do you recall your reasons or motivation for wanting to become a counsellor?
2. How was your actual training experience, did it meet your expectations?
3. What was your placement experience like and did it impact on your 'view' of the counselling profession?
4. At graduation what were your lasting impressions of your experience and what were your thoughts for the future at this stage?
5. What is your current working experience and how do you feel about it?
6. Are you being offered or do you seek out opportunities for professional development?
7. How much do you know about the political or regulatory changes in the profession?
8. Looking at the big picture...what is your perception of the impact that these changes will have on the profession as a whole?
9. What impact (if any) do you think the changes will have on you personally or are you actually experiencing an impact now?
10. What are your personal hopes, dreams, and fears for the future as a counsellor?
11. Is there anything else pertaining to the study that you would like to talk about?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE – AMENDED

1. Prior to training, do you recall your reasons or motivation for wanting to become a counsellor?
2. How was your actual training experience, did it meet your expectations?
3. What was your placement experience like and how did that impact on your 'view' of the counselling profession?
4. At graduation what were your lasting impressions of your training experience and what were your thoughts and plans for the future at this point?
5. What is your current working experience; is it voluntary or paid and what are your views on this?
6. Do you think that working voluntarily or paid has an impact on your work with clients. If so what are they?
7. Are you being offered (by your place of work) opportunities for professional development or do you find your own opportunities?
8. Are you a member of a professional body? If so, for how long and do you have any interaction with them?
9. Are you aware of the imminent 'regulatory' changes in the profession?
What impact do you think they will have on the profession
10. What impact (if any) do you think the changes will have on you personally; are you actually experiencing an impact now?
11. What are your personal ambitions, hopes, dreams, and fears for the future as a counsellor?
12. Is there anything else pertaining to the study that you would like to talk about?

Appendix 7

SAMPLING PROCESS REVISION & PILOT INTERVIEWS

Initial 7-part process for recruitment and data collection

1. Participant sees advert/email/poster and responds via email/telephone.
2. Participant completes the selection pro-forma to ascertain that they fulfill the inclusion criteria.
3. Pre-interview telephone call. Reminding them of their rights to withdraw of the ethics and rights of taking part in the study.
4. Email / forward consent form and return.
5. Pre-Interview Introduction.
6. Interview takes place.
7. Thank you letter (with typed transcript where completed).

Interview 1 14/08/2009

Interview 2 22/08/2009

After the Pilot interviews had taken place Part 3 of the process was dropped and Parts 4 and 6 were amalgamated.

Criteria for Inclusion

Originally - Participants describe themselves as Counsellors.

Became - Participants describe themselves as Person-Centred Counsellors.

Participant Recruitment Method and Time-line				
Date	Method	No	RR	P
30/08/2009	Emailed BACP with advert for Therapy Today.	1	3	0
12/09/2009	Emailed known colleagues asking them to forward the email in its entirety.	27	16	2
12/09/2009	Emailed charitable organisations.	4	2	0
12/09/2009	Emailed Universities with poster for display.	8	5	1
14/09/2009	Mailed a letter and poster to charitable organisations.	12	4	1
12/04/2010	Emailed colleague suggestions.	10	3	2
30/06/2010	Emailed colleague suggestions.	8	3	2

Key

Appendix 8

PARTICIPANT SELECTION PRO-FORMA

M.A counselling student requires person-centred graduate counsellors (2005-2008) willing to discuss the personal impact on them of the ongoing political and professional changes in the counselling arena. Face to face or telephone interviews arranged as preferred - confidentiality and anonymity a top priority.

Name _____

Please circle all that apply

Area	Scotland	North East	North West	Midlands	South East	South West & Wales
Gender	Male	Female				
Age	Under 30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	71+
Training	College	University	Private			
Highest Qualification	Certificate	Diploma	Advanced Diploma	Post graduate diploma	Under-graduate degree	Masters degree
Year of Graduation	2005	2006	2007	2008		
Main Counselling approach	Person-centred	Psycho-dynamic	Cognitive Behavioural	Integrative	Other (please state)	
Registration with professional body	BACP	UKCP	BABCP	BPS	Other (please state)	
Accredited	Yes	No				

How shall I contact you? _____

Appendix 9

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

University of Chester

Department of Social & Communication Studies M.A. in Counselling Studies

Research Project Consent Form

I,.....hereby give consent for the details of an interview involving me and Geraldine Johnson and an audio tape recording of that session to be submitted as part of a research project for the M.A. in Counselling Studies at University of Chester. I understand that the recording of the session will be transcribed by a typist, appointed by Geraldine Johnson and that any references that may lead to my identification will be deleted. I understand that while my words or phrases may be used in the main body of the project, there will be no reference made to my identity. I understand my right to withdraw my participation and my personal material at any time throughout the research proceedings.

I also understand that, without my further consent, the transcript could be read and seen by counselling course staff for the purposes of assessment and moderation and by the external examiner for the course in question. I understand that all are bound by the BACP Ethical Framework with regard to confidentiality. I understand that after the examination, the tape and transcript will be erased or returned to me. I understand that without further consent the research project will be made available for public scrutiny and I permit Geraldine Johnson to use excerpts in presentations or any future publication.

Signed:

(Interviewee).....Date.....

Signed:

(Researcher).....Date.....

Appendix 10

PRE-INTERVIEW INRODUCTION

Thanks once again for volunteering to take part in my research project. Just to let you know that in order to guard your identity once I start the interview I won't use your name at all.

I've prepared a semi-structured interview for the purpose of this interview, which has 12 questions. I am attempting as the researcher to keep myself (as much as possible) separate from the process, so to this end I will just ask the question and allow you to answer. They are the same 12 questions that I will ask everyone and as such there is no right or wrong answer to the questions. They are designed in such a way as to allow me to gain insight in the unique experience of each person taking part and as such I am hopeful that they will provide a diverse range of thoughts, opinions and experiences.

Each question focuses on a different period in your life specifically pertaining to your journey towards becoming a counsellor (before, during and after) and towards the end of the interview focuses very much on your current working experience as counsellor.

The questions concentrate on two distinct areas, the first part on your actual experience of the event or time in question and the second part on your thoughts and feelings about your experience. I will help direct your focus back to the question if necessary but without offering any additional personal thoughts or opinions. Some of the questions may overlap in theme, but please don't worry about it, the semi-structured nature of the interview allows for this overlap.

As I said, there is no right or wrong answers to the questions I'll just simply ask the questions and let you describe your experience and your thoughts and feelings around that experience. Please do feel free to ask me to stop or to take a break if you need to.

Appendix 11

TRANSCRIPT RETURN & MEMBER CHECKS

Address
Telephone
Mobile
Email

Date as postmark.

Dear

Thank you so much for participating in my research project in part-fulfilment of my Masters Degree in Counselling Studies at the University of Chester. Please find enclosed the full transcript of your interview with me. I would welcome your feedback or comments on the transcript and I will contact you by telephone to re-confirm consent before using any of the material from your interview.

Just to remind you of my obligations as a researcher and your rights as a participant: -

- I have enclosed the full transcript of our interview and you have the right to ask for sections to be omitted and / or any identifying factors to be changed.
- The material given by you remains your property and you have a right to comment on and decide how it is used, interpreted and presented.
- You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without need for explanation or fear of reprisal.
- The data generated is accessible to both my project supervisor and me whilst the study is in progress. The data produced for the final dissertation will be stored in Chester library and accessible to students and tutors of Chester University and sister universities.
- The individual participant's data will only be accessible to you (the participant) me, the project supervisor and internal and external examiners.
- If you have any queries, concerns or discomfort about any aspect of this research project please do raise this directly with me. If you feel that you are unable to speak to me directly please contact my research supervisor Tony Parnell who is a Senior Lecturer (Counselling) at the University of Chester.

Thank you once again, your input is greatly appreciated, I will be in contact soon.

Yours sincerely,

Geraldine Johnson

Appendix 12

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT PREPARATION

Each participant interview was prepared to exact standards and then printed onto different coloured paper. The first table shows how the interviews were prepared generically and the subsequent boxes refer to each participant in order.

Generic preparation	All Interviews
Total Word Count	47, 348
Total time	5.25:08
Font & Size	Calibri 11
Header	Participant pseudonym
Footer	Numbered bottom right.
Margins	5cm left, 5cm right, 2.5cm top and bottom.
Text	Justified.
Additional preparation 1	Line Numbers.
Additional preparation 2	Deleting names of organisations and any potential participant identifying material.
Additional preparation 3	Participant profile information and date and time of interview.
Additional preparation 3	Final speck check.

Participant A:	Andy
Date of Interview:	6/10/09
Words:	8,061
Time:	62:10
No of Pages:	25
Transcript returned:	18/12/09
Amendments agreed:	Page 1: Line 11 – Spelling. Page 3: Line 12 – Clarification of term.
Approval affirmed:	21/12/09
Prepared & Printed:	27/11/11

Participant B:	Barry
Date of Interview:	17/10/09
Words:	7,046
Time:	54:30
No of Pages:	21
Transcript returned:	28/02/10
Amendments agreed:	None given.
Approval affirmed:	05/03/2010
Prepared & Printed:	27/11/2011

Participant C:	Carol
Date of Interview:	06/02/10
Words:	4,608
Time:	31:26
No of Pages:	15
Transcript returned:	15/06/10
Amendments agreed:	None given
Approval affirmed:	18/06/10
Prepared & Printed:	27/11/11

Participant D:	Diane
Date of Interview:	21/06/10
Words:	6,366
Time:	42:40
No of Pages:	19
Transcript returned:	27/07/10
Amendments agreed:	Page 12: Line 4 – Question missed. Page 12: Clarification of term. Page 13: Participant took a break. Page 17: Spelling mistake.
Approval affirmed:	01/08/10
Prepared & Printed	28/11/11

Participant E:	Ellen
Date of Interview:	22/06/10
Words:	5,282
Time:	36:15
No of Pages:	18
Transcript returned:	31/07/10
Amendments agreed:	None given.
Approval affirmed:	07/08/10
Prepared & Printed:	28/11/11

Participant F:	Fiona
Date of Interview:	18/07/10
Words:	6,536
Time:	40:38
No of Pages:	19
Transcript returned:	25/07/10
Amendments agreed:	Page 6: Lines 21-23 - Spelling mistake.
Approval affirmed:	28/07/10
Prepared & Printed:	28/11/11

Participant G:	Gemma
Date of Interview:	28/07/10 – Telephone Interview
Words:	4,011
Time:	24:53
No of Pages:	13
Transcript returned:	08/08/10
Amendments agreed:	None given.
Approval affirmed:	09/08/10
Prepared & Printed:	28/11/11

Participant H:	Harriet
Date of Interview:	30/07/10 – Telephone Interview
Words:	5,438
Time:	32:36
No of Pages:	17
Transcript returned:	08/08/10
Amendments agreed:	None given.
Approval affirmed:	12/08/10
Prepared & Printed:	28/11/11

Appendix 13

DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

The data collected amounted to 5.25:08 audio minutes which, transcribed equalled 47,348k words on 147 pages.

The transcripts were prepared to a specific format, with wide margins for note making, page and line numbers added and printed onto different coloured paper to visually aid the analysis and identification of participants who were allocated a code letter A-H and a pseudonym beginning with that letter.

(Photograph A)



Photograph A

The first stage involved deconstructing the data. This was initially concerned with listening, reflecting and making notes of any recurring words, phrases or topics and noting them in the margins and later adding connecting themes or threads to my research discovery chart. After considerable immersion and reflection I proceeded to the next stage, segmenting the text into stand-alone,

discrete, units of meaning. I systematically went through each transcript, ruling off and coding the units of meaning like so: TA3/22-24 = Transcript A, Page 3, Lines 22 to 24. In order to process the data in a confidential manner, I allocated a room in my home as my laboratory and for the period of time that it took to process the data, this room was off limits to family members or friends.

I started my data analysis by cutting and attaching each unit of meaning to an index card. Then, choosing a prominent theme, I wrote that on an index card, attaching it to the top of a large sheet of paper, with space to add several index cards below. (Photograph B)



Photograph B

It quickly became apparent that it would be a more efficient and controlled procedure to process the Transcripts one at a time. I continued with Transcript

A - choosing a theme and pasting relevant index cards to that page.

Transcript A produced 24 first stage categories as described in the table below.

Categories after processing Transcript A for the first time.	
No	Categories
1.	Motivation to be a counsellor – Interest in psychology, unhappy /dissatisfied with job, advice giver.
2.	Training experience – Good early experience, well structured, room for improvement.
3.	Tutors – Vague, critical, defensive, expectation of more realness and being grounded.
4.	Professional body – Uninvolved, lack of interaction, compelled to join.
5.	Training – Personal experience, work background.
6.	Graduation –Ceremony
7.	Time Management - Placements
8.	Placements – Professionalism, ethics, rules, structure, attitude to clients.
9.	Personality Type – Participant.
10.	Authenticity – Way of being, growth, counselling as the tool to this.
11.	Professional Development – Increased client hours, access to CPD
12.	Counsellor work – Job/Vocation, earning a living.
13.	Client payment – Arguments for.
14.	Client payments – Arguments against.
15.	Client payment – Ambivalence, counter-intuitive.
16.	Self-development – Consolidating training.
17.	Regulation – Politics, social constructs.
18.	Self valuing – Versus money.
19.	Self valuing – Money.
20.	Regulation – Opportunities.
21.	Personal Philosophy.
22.	Spirituality – Religion, beliefs.
23.	Life experience – Personal, childhood, conditions of worth.
24.	Making a difference – Going forward.

As I worked through transcript A, I became aware that a number of units of information containing data that could apply to more than one category. I experimented with copying and dividing some of the units of meaning and adding them to the other categories. I then pondered on how I could keep control of the management of the data if I continued to copy or divide it in this way. I decided to forgo the division or copying of data until I had processed all 8 transcripts, in order to be able to keep account of each piece of

information. After processing eight transcripts the categories extended to 43 with 616 units of meaning as described in the table below.

		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
No	Categories	Units of meaning per category							
1.	Prior work experience.	4	1	1	9			2	6
2.	Motivation, experiencing counselling as a client.	1	2				1		
3.	Motivation, unhappy, dissatisfied with job.	2			2	2			
4.	Motivation, advice giver, help others, manager, trainer, mentor.	3	1	3	2	2	4	2	2
5.	Motivation, interest in psychology.	1	2	1					
6.	Motivation, finding something -self validation.	3	1						
7.	Training-structure/course.	1	4	1	1			2	3
8.	Training experience, satisfaction – positives.	3	5	2	2	3	3		1
9.	Training experience – negatives, dissatisfaction.	4	3	4	11		2	7	
10.	Expectations of tutors.	2		2	4	1		1	4
11.	Expectations of the learning process.	2	3	4	4	3	1		1
12.	Time management Work/life balance.	1					1		1
13.	Graduation and ceremony.	1	1	3	1		1	1	1
14.	Difficulty finding placements.					1	2	1	2
15.	Placements - positives of working there.	2	6	3	2	2	8	3	2
16.	Placements - negatives of working there.		1	5	11	3	1		1
17.	Professional development – CPD.						10	2	7
18.	Client payment - views for.	5	3	1		3	1		
19.	Client payment - views against.	6	3		2				
20.	Does counsellor pay affect the quality of work?	6	2	2	1	1	4	1	
21.	Counselling - work (is it a job?)	2	4	6	3		10	5	8
22.	Counsellor relationship with money/payment.	2	3		2	4	5	1	
23.	Self valuing - value versus money.	2	4		1	4	1	1	
24.	Professional bodies and membership.	7	7	2	2	2	6	4	
25.	Professional bodies and interaction.						1	5	4
26.	Regulation - politics and debate.	5	7	5	3	1	5	3	1
27.	Regulation - Opportunities.	4	1	1		12	3	2	3
28.	Regulation – Drawbacks.		4		2	2	6	2	2
29.	Regulation - Changes to client work.		5	3				1	
30.	Professional Development - work and training.	4	5	1	3	4	9		
31.	Self- development - Moving closer to who I am.	10	2	4	1	1	1		2
32.	Self care.		2			2			3
33.	Authenticity / Way of being / Growth.	2				5	1		1
34.	Rogers influence.	3							
35.	Personal philosophy - awareness, compassion.	5							2

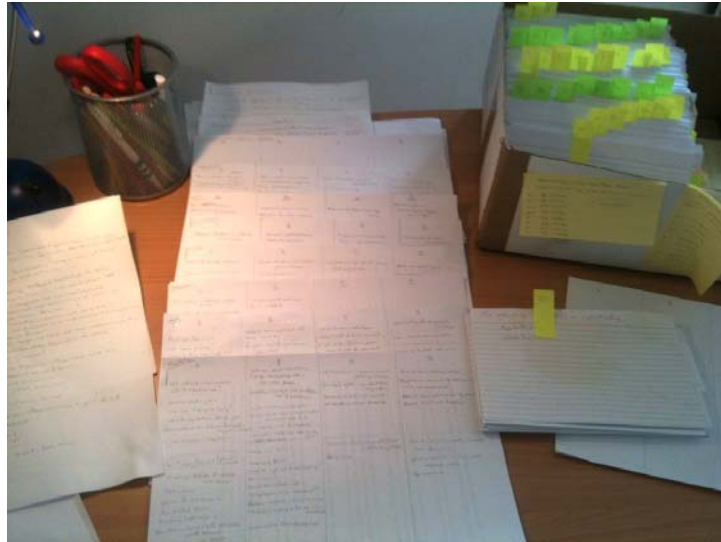
36.	Spirituality – religion.	6	2	2					
37.	Work with clients.		4	4	2	9	2	1	5
38.	Dreams for the future.						1		2
39.	Despondency.		1				2	1	
40.	Negative attitudes to counseling.					2		1	
41.	Group, attitudes, feelings, cohesion.					2	1		
42.	Having a voice, listened to.	1	1			1	3		2
43.	Personality type and personal life experience	5	2		1	3		1	
	Totals	105	92	60	72	75	96	50	66

When processed the data covered all four of the laboratory walls. (Photograph C)



Photograph C

Each category was carefully removed and placed in order into a small filing box facilitating the refining and reorganisation of the data. Nine categories (33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43) were subsumed into other categories leaving 34 categories. The information from the discovery chart was disseminated onto theme led discovery sheets to continue to aid the exploration of all the data at desk level. (Photograph D)



Photograph D

The 34 categories were recreated on my lap-top and I began the process of exploration of relationships across the categories and the constant refinement of themes. At this stage I was able to duplicate or divide information for each unit of meaning allowing it to influence other or multiple categories, which lead to the development of 13 provisional themes with 51 sub categories.

SUMMARY OF MAIN THEMES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

THEME	SUB-CATEGORIES
1.0 Counsellors historical work experience.	1.1 Leader 1.2 Personality type
2.0 Motivations to become counsellors.	2.1 Personal experience of counselling 2.2 Validation from others 2.3 Life transition
2.0 Counsellors training at Level 2 and 3.	2.1 Finding 'something' 2.2 Course structure 2.3 Personal journey
3.0 Counsellors training at Level 4 and 5.	3.1 Course structure 3.2 Tutors contribution 3.3 Organisational support 3.4 Communication 3.5 Time management and placements 3.6 Group dynamics 3.7 Self and learning process 3.8 Graduation
4.0 Counsellors placements	4.1 Professional practice

experiences.	4.2 Unprofessional practice 4.3 Client work 4.4 Personal journey 4.5 Training and development opportunities?
5.0 Counselling work.	5.1 Optimistic at graduation 5.2 Actual opportunities of paid work minimal. 5.3 Is it a job?
6.0 Counsellors views on being paid.	6.1 For 6.2 Against 6.3 Ambivalent 6.4 Affect on the work with client
7.0 Counsellors self- valuing and valuing of 'counselling'	7.1 Self 7.2 The profession 7.3 Despondency 7.4 Negative attitudes to counsellors
8.0 Professional bodies and their role in their profession.	8.1 Professional requirements 8.2 What do they do for me?
9.0 The impact of government changes	9.1 Impact on training 9.2 Impact on Professional body 9.3 Impact on organisations 9.4. Impact on job opportunities 9.5 Impact on client work 9.6 Having a voice
10.0 Regulation	10.1 Politics and debate 10.2 Opportunities 10.3 Drawbacks 10.4 Changes to client work
11.0 Professional development	10.1 Opportunities to continue to study 10.2 Training opportunities
12.0 Personal development	10.1 Way of being 10.2 Journey
13.0 The Future for them and the counselling profession	12.1 Ambitions and hopes 12.2 Fears and worries 12.3 Personal philosophy

The process of exploring and refining continued until the data was reconstructed into 5 themes and 25 categories, detailed in Chapter 4, which most accurately represent the original transcript content.

Appendix 14

OUTCOMES DATA

The outcomes categories were transferred to my lap-top and the filtering and refining of the themes and categories continued through several more stages, reducing the number of pages and words at each stage to get to the final outcome findings presented in Chapter 4. The stages of refinement were as follows:

1. 147 pages 47k words
2. 74 pages 35k words
3. 60 pages 21k words
4. 39 pages 14k words
5. 17 pages 5k words

Due to the large amounts of data involved, it is not possible to present the complete original set of outcome data. This sample is from the final outcomes category five, including the full harvested 'units of meaning'.

5.0 Counsellor knowledge of and engagement with political change.	5.1 Ambiguity around statutory regulation. 5.2 Positive views of Statutory Regulation 5.3 The impact of political change on training. 5.4 The BACP's role during political change. 5.5. The impact on organisations. 5.6 IAPT's opportunities and client work. 5.7 The future of counselling.
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5.0 Counsellor knowledge of and engagement with political change.

5.1 Ambiguity around statutory regulation.

TA20/21-23 The world is always going to be aah in dispute, in conflict, there will be winners and there will be losers.

TA18/24-28 I prefer to listen to others opinions and just... just let that percolate through and then make my own mind up, arguing seems, somehow pointless.

TA20/16-20 It may affect my opportunities, but you know, I'm responsible, and I'll make my own opportunities.

TB21/20-32 Counselling is in such a transitional period, and a changing period and er who knows where it will end.

TB11/4-6 There's a lot of uncertainty that's crept into the profession, there's a loss of direction. We feel directionless in certain ways.

TC12/14-19 I feel like I'm in a good place really, you know, to listen to ideas. (...) I don't feel pressured at the minute by the discussions that are going on. So I'm ok with it, yeah. See how it develops basically.

TC10/31-32 I haven't got any feelings one way or the other about being part of a regulatory body.

TC11/1-6 I want to make sure I'm doing everything professionally, I'm very open about what I do, particularly with it being with people (...) who are very, very vulnerable. I've got no problem, I'm happy to be, audited (...) or inspected or...no problem with that at all.

TD15/22-26 I've seen the poster up for the other one, (ISA) for ages, everyone protesting about it, and all the rest of it. But that was the only one that I was aware of.

TD17/3-6 My fears would be that it becomes so overregulated and so expensive to sort of keep your CPD going, and to register for various memberships, that you know, I won't be able to afford to carry on.

TE13/14-19 I've just done (...) nearly four years of training and now you're asking me to do something else? And if I don't do it, then I can't work, as a counsellor?" So there's an unfairness to that.

TE13/1-9 It's a hoop that we need to jump through and for people who are serious about being a counsellor will jump through that hoop, people that aren't won't.

TF17/12-19 It's a bit of a worry 'cause do they want you to do different things for them to what the BACP want you to do?

TF15/5-17 Health Professional Council is it? (...) I don't really understand it all and I'm thinking, "why are they changing it all?"

TF15/5-17 If the HPC takes over (...) and you're not accredited they don't want to know you, so it's really important to be accredited.

TF17/ 3-8 I think I'm quite safe. (...) I hate things when they're (...) in limbo its not this but its not that. When it's all sorted and it's up and running proper, I think it may be better.

TF16/18-29 I just know “I’m qualified”, and you know, and I want to get my accreditation, and so I’m covered completely for myself.

5.2 Positive views of Statutory Regulation

TA6/206 I had a professional qualification (...) so I was used to that sort of regulation, that need to focus your mind on the protection really of people, on ethical working and so on and so forth.

TF17/7-10 I think it may be better. (...) It’ll get all the other people out the way that are not qualified, erm, so you’ve got to reach a certain standard to become part of that profession.

TF15/28-32 It’ll be really good in one way, because it really annoys me that anybody can call themselves a counsellor or psychotherapist and they can be out there doing it and they’re not qualified and they’re just calling themselves that.

TF16/1-7 So I think that’ll be really good, you know, it’ll get all the ones, out the way that, (...) you know, people that are not qualified erm they won’t stand a chance erm under the new regulation.

TF16/1-7 And vulnerable people, clients, you know just think “oh, there’s a counsellor advertised, I’ll go see a counsellor” and they’re not knowing that they’re accredited or you know erm qualified or whatever.

TE12/26-32 It will wheedle out people who aren’t really fully committed to the counselling profession. (...) so it will hopefully... free up some jobs for people who actually should have the jobs (laugh).

TE13/1-9 It’ll be regulated and counsellors will ... have to work ethically and they will have to continue their personal development and erm I don’t think that’s a bad thing

TE13/11-13 I’m not judging anyone erm, but... but I think it’ll (...) clean up the profession.

TE13/19-22 It’ll wheedle out the ones that haven’t got the ability perhaps?

5.3 The impact of political change on training.

TB11/11-15 And of course the qualifications as well you know (...) I’m 57 this year...

TB17/30-33 It’s throwing the whole world of counselling into turmoil, because everything has to be restructured, *training* and...

TF17/12-19 And it’s like who do you do what for...and different levels?

TG10/27-30 I'm not sure what the changes are; I think they want everyone to do Masters Degrees or something, and they're not going to recognise current qualifications. That could be wrong

TH11/15-19 I've just finished a CBT course and (...) the (...) tutor (...) he was telling us about it and, (...) you're going to have to have at least Level 5.

TH11/31-32 Once you've got your qualification, nobody can take them off you.

TH12/13-20 My opinion is that...a piece of paper is a piece of paper, and is only a start and the experiences you gain along the way are far superior.

5.4 The BACPs role during political change.

TA19/ 4-15 I think it is necessary to have some part of the professional organisation getting into the politics (...) I'm grateful that somebody's doing that (...) putting their mind to it, and making arguments. They are no doubt people who have been in the profession for years and they have a grasp of the context in which we work.

TA18/13-24 I could be drawn again into putting on a coat... of knowledge and knowing and having an opinion and being informed. (...) I want to let that go.

TA17/19-29 But my picture of a professional body is of people getting together (...) having to have an opinion and be well informed (...) to take a stand on issues, things like 'should counselling be regulated' and this business about 'the difference between psychotherapy and counselling'.

TB10/29-32 There's moves afoot for (...) a change in the counselling profession you know re-evaluating what the counsellor does, ...what a psychotherapist does and the difference to that.

TB17/24-29 There's now an on going restructuring of counselling and therapeutic services generally. And it seems to be this split, if you like, erm between counsellors on one hand and their little world and their qualifications and whatever, and the definition applied to counselling and the (...) psychological services

TC9/16-24 I haven't read a lot (...) about the current changes in the profession. I've just tried to avoid them for the time being; almost on purpose really, erm until my supervisor and I think it's time to really sort of consider accreditation, and once things settle down.

TD19/ 14-22 They (*BACP*) should be making it really, really, really, obvious, for people (...) I mean counselling isn't my sole focus. (...) I need to receive something, which is going to hit me in the face...and say look, take notice of this, this is what's happening.

TE14/3-10 it's like when I was doing my diploma; I hate doing the written work I find it so hard to put it down on paper. But I needed to do it to get to where I am today, so I need to do that to get, you know, to become accredited so I can become regulated, so ... I need to do it. So ... it just impacts on my time, but where I work I've got a lot of support with psychologists around that; and me people who will help.

TF15/1-4 I was looking into accreditation er...maybe last year some time, (...) and I remember my supervisor saying just hang on for a while erm, get your hours in first, but it's all going to change anyway.

TG10/26-28 I've heard talk, (...) that you'd be better off if you were accredited. I'm not sure what the changes are.

TG11/4-8 They've sent something through, (*BACP*) but I haven't paid a lot of attention to it because my thoughts on the whole thing now is, "I can't change, what I've done, to get to where I am" so I'm just hoping that by becoming an accredited member it's going to be enough.

TH11/19-25 But he (*her tutor*) reckons that with the change of government it might be put on hold.

5.5.The impact on organisations.

TB16/9-20 The senior manager was putting a bid in to provide counselling services for the primary care trust. And it was all very optimistic because we thought: well to be honest; we thought we'd get it. We really did. (...) We didn't get it.

TB18/29-33 There was a team of eight counsellors, well that's just gone, that's finished, erm you know and it's very, very sad.

TB11/27-30 & TB12/1-4 I'm lucky really 'cause I'm working with a special unit (...) the funding is essentially for the group and the group work, so, er, the funding will still come in.

TB13/25-28 But in recent times, because of such uncertainty that's crept in, I felt that my training opportunities have diminished; I'm not getting the same

TB16/9-20 We think we didn't get it because it was based on erm...cost. We probably couldn't provide it at the cheapest rate.

TC12/1-7 The agency I'm practicing in, erm they've got, they, they've certainly not told me anything about this. I've heard all about it from reading myself and talking to my supervisor, so there's no pressure at all from the agency.

TD11/28-31 They've stopped counselling essentially just apart from one day a week.

TB20/22-26 On-going training is an issue, erm networking,

TB13/28-32 I'm starting to feel a little bit isolated in that respect; (...) I've got (...) the placement can't really provide erm the same level of support as it used to, which is, which is a little bit disappointing.

TD11/18-23 They've just had a bit of a shakeup (...) where I work and they've gone down to one day now instead of offering the four days. So all the counsellors that were employed (...) have not been offered positions, and I was actually offered a position there so I've stayed with them. (*Placement-Unpaid*)

TA12/16-19 Short courses were being provided (...) I think they still are but not to any great extent.

5.6 IAPTs opportunities and client work.

TA19/25-28 It may help me get a job because they are going to pay counsellors less, I hear, potentially, so I could get a job.

TB19/1 Counsellors are being made redundant, so that's impacted on me.

TB21/9-15 There are opportunities for me out there, but not necessarily as a person-centred counsellor, (...) which is sad really you know 'cause that's, that's essentially who I am, is a person-centred counsellor.

TC7/3-12 My supervisor works for the NHS and she was saying (...) there does seem to be more work promised within the NHS, and its subsidiaries.

TC11/6-7 Erm, in terms of the CBT, I think that's what my supervisors alluded to actually that this is coming up, and there will be opportunities,

TD12/1-3 My supervisor's also asked me about working some temporary work for her doing telephone assessment stuff. And then saying that there might be a position there.

TE8/1-15 I got the job to cover maternity leave. And it was a case of...I didn't really want to do it, I didn't... I felt frightened to do it, because of the nature of the clients that you're working with, so, but I thought, if I don't get my feet under the table, and if I don't get myself a paid counselling job, and get the experience, then nobody's going to want me anyway.

TE13/29-33 & T14/1-3 When I've seen a job it says 'accredited'. It used to say working towards accreditation.

TE14/22-24 I know I'll always find work somehow.

TF19/3-5 My fear is, that the jobs' not going to be there. And I've worked damn hard for five years, and then I haven't got a job, for what I've trained in.

TG11/18-26 I don't know if it's going to be one and the same, is to do with the NHS and the 'improved access to therapeutic.... Whatever' IAPT I think it is. What's really annoyed me is the fact that I can apply for a job with no experience at all; go in as a low level therapist, after a year of learning CBT.

TG11/30-34 I applied for a job, (*NHS*) and I applied for the higher level (*IAPT*) because of the fact I'd got three years, (...) college work (...) two years experience, I didn't even get called for an interview.

TG12/1-11 I've applied for the higher-level thinking that my experience would count, but it didn't because it wasn't CBT. So if I had have gone in for the lower level, I would have stood more chance. But I suppose it goes against everything that I've done and achieved to just forget my current qualification and my work, to go in at a lower level. So I abandoned the idea.

TG12/17-27 All schools were to have, (...) counsellors in them (...) and nothings happened at all. (...) It's all well and good saying, "all schools will have access to counsellors", it's whether the school wants to pay for it or not. So it's another thing about doing the talk.

TG7/5-9 I had read articles in the paper about (...) the need for counsellors, and Gordon brown was going to employ so many more counsellors etc... but after being in the industry (...) I've realised that it's all talk.

TH11/25-26 So I know they're looking at level 7 aren't they as being the erm lowest I think? (*For NHS posts*)

TH11/29-34 I think it'll be a case of wait and see. (...) If you're settled into a job, erm... I don't know whether there will be an impact but I think it might impact on getting any other work, moving.

TH12/2-3 I think voluntary I don't think there will be a problem, (*hm*) but if it's a paid professional job I think it could be.

TB19/22-29 And the other side of the coin is that (...) my clients are more (...) demanding of me, and you know that takes a lot out of me you know, I'm feeling tired, I'm feeling.... I'm feeling whether I've, the necessary skills to work with such clients, and this is the reason why I'm now having a break and I'm assessing my situation

TB20/1-8 It is impacting very much on my work you know. And it's a pity really 'cause I've had such a great time working, (...) with clients who really did want to engage and now there's sort of a shift to (...) clients that are...not wanting to engage in many respects and are more demanding and have.... need greater support in other areas and really need erm.... close psychiatric supervision.

TB10/10-17 We're getting more and more clients that have... enduring... mental illness. Some with Psychosis (...) Schizophrenia, Paranoid Schizophrenia, and I found this type of clients exceedingly (...) demanding on me er so much so I've now spoken to my manager, recently, erm with a view to me having a break from counselling just for to...you know, for the safety of my clients and the safety of myself.

TB19/7-11 It is likely now the type of clients coming to me will change,

TB19/ 17-20 A client with an enduring mental illness who's you know, being medicated, (...) wouldn't qualify to be counselled by a student counsellor. So that means, that there's, there were fewer and fewer suitable clients for student counsellors.

TB11/6-25 In terms of the CBT, I think that's what my supervisors alluded to actually that this is coming up, and there will be opportunities, it's just very directed; one way of looking at somebody's problem is how I feel really (hm) erm, and although I myself use different tools as I've just referred to in the book, I still use them from a person-centred approach.

TB11/6-25 One size doesn't fit all. And CBT doesn't always fit the current situation.

TD10/1-4 She asked me to finish off two of my clients because (...) we're going to eight-week erm contracts. (...) that's never happened before we've never had restrictions before.

TB17/7-11 Erm and then it was how that was going to be funded, and you know because obviously person-centred counselling, although it's supposed to be short to medium term, you know can often run; I mean I've had clients 40 sessions 45 sessions.

TB10/22-23 So sort of moving away from purest one-to-one person-centred counselling

TB11/7-11 And of course with the structured effect within the PCT (...) and their way of erm processing client, (...), through a system, you know, er where (...) CBT is really (...) the main way of counselling.

TB16/20-31 & TB17/1-7 I know we were talking about the phased- approach being introduced by the National health, whereby you'd go through various stages and (...) I think there were four stages,

TE8/8-10 I didn't really want to do it, (*job*) I felt frightened to do it, because of the nature of the clients that you're working with,

TE8/23-28 I'm counselling people with impairments often I'm very (...), directive in that, (...) whereas working for the agency I am purely person centred, (...) it's a lot calmer, (...) and I need that. I need to see the end result as well whereas with the brain injury that doesn't always come. Might never come.

TG7/1-2 And also the way the NHS has gone now, unless you're CBT trained, they don't want to know.

TG12/16 But again, it's the quick fix.

TG6/31-35 Trying to (...) earn a living in the profession is extremely hard.

TH12/24-32 I think what you do either works or doesn't work and the way you work...yes you have further insights and more depth perhaps but it's not going to actually change the way you work is it?

5.7 The future of counselling.

TA9/23-28 I've spent I've spent a fair amount of money on this, a heck of a lot of time on this, I've gone through an awful of a lot of pain with this, (...) and in some ways heaven help me...I don't know who it's legitimate to.

TA11/25-26 I went through training, I've paid out a lot of money.

TB9/28-29 I'm personally going through a transitional phase with my counselling at the moment.

TB11/1-6 My initial sort of enthusiasm and my initial sort of erm love of the work.... is being sort of, erm I don't know. I can't find the right words.

TB11/1-6 There's a lot of uncertainty that's crept into the profession, there's a loss of direction, we feel directionless in certain ways.

TB14/10-21 I'm going through a period of uncertainty, I've (...) I can, either finish counselling completely, which (...)... a bit of me says I don't want to be beaten (...) and with humility, I think it would be a loss to the counselling profession (...) if I gave it up completely.

TB10/24-27 I'm sort of in a quandary at the moment, 'cause I don't really...it's now down to me, to decide my direction, where I want to go and er...about my future and counselling.

TB14/10-15 I'm going through a period of uncertainty, I've only recently talked to my manager about this (...) she's been great.

TB20/20-22 I struggle now with the....the overall structuring in counselling. I struggle with erm... the direction it's going in, where I fit (...) in the counselling world.

TD17/11-15 I think... to me if you were to maintain voluntary status then the least they can do is actually register you and pay all those sort of fees. I think personally your placement. And maybe work place as well. I don't know.

TD17/8-11 Can I keep affording to keep giving up hours of my time at this expense? (...) It's all give, give, give, and no payback in any way shape or form.

TD17/-11 If I'm not getting paid for it, I've got no income coming in from it, then at some point or other you have to justify to yourself well can I keep affording to keep giving up hours of my time at this expense?

TD17/23-31 I could end up in theory paying, you know, quite a number of fees out just to be registered and a member of various things.

TD17/23-31 At some point or another you're going to have to say to yourself "you know: can I afford to do this?" Which I think will be a damn shame after all the hours and effort you put in to study and all the previous voluntary hours you've given and so on. I think it would be a real shame.

TE5/19-29 It took three and a half years out of my life and I reflected back on my journey, and how I'd changed in that time and sometimes not for the better. My life actually... it got worse before it got better to be honest. It really erm...upset the apple cart. (...) I looked back and thought (...) it's like bittersweet actually. It's like moving house to a bigger house and yet you still yearn for the house you were in, because it was comfy. That's what it was like. It was very bittersweet.

TE7/12-17 I left (*previous job*) so actually in some ways it didn't ruin my life... counselling, but it really upset it... disrupted it. (...) it disrupted it that much that, and then it wasn't paying me anything back. So for a while I did feel quite cheated by the whole thing.

TE7/22-22 I've changed, I've made changes in my life; which were for the best, but it's one of them isn't it? They were the best but it: it made my life a bit harder, at the time.

TF9/26-28 Cause I put 100% into getting to the places, working with the people, I'm fully committed and yet I don't get anything back.

TF17/12-19 It's a bit of a worry 'cause do they want you to do different things for them to what the BACP want you to do?

TF17/12-19 And it's like who do you do what for...and different levels?

TF17/12-19 Some people say "oh its not worth (...) going through accreditation, 'cause It's all going to change to the HPC, and they'll want something a bit different, so you're wasting your time doing that " its like "oh what do you do?"

TF17/21-26 Then I thought why? Nothings set in stone at the moment I'm just going with what is.

TF10/8-30 What point do you cut off from...? (...) I still want to study loads, but (...) I haven't got any money coming in, from all this...erm time and effort I've been putting in to counselling.

TF17/21-26 At one time I was thinking" (...) I'll just not do anything" and I thought, "no, (...) you need to carry on as things are, before things change"

TG6/31-35 I feel resentful, 'cause you spend so long at college, and it's not cheap either, because they expect you to be in personal therapy, have supervision, (...) and trying to make back your money or even earn a living in the profession is extremely hard.

TG6/31-35 I feel resentful, (...) the course itself isn't cheap, and erm trying to make back your money or even earn a living in the profession is extremely hard.

TG6/31-35 Trying to (...) earn a living in the profession is extremely hard.

TH15/10-15 I'm not going to think about it. Because all my life I've been able to; as my husband would say "oh (*name of participant*) will see us through" it's happened two or three times with things, and if you, work hard and put groundwork in (*yeah*) it will come.

Appendix 15

JOURNAL EXTRACTS

08/06/2009

I had my initial meeting with Tony Parnell (Supervisor) in Chester. Points agreed for work over the next week.

1. Focus on key questions for interview, developing question test.
2. Possible pilot of interview questions to revise these and practice research interview technique.
3. Technology and transcription process, possible telephone interviews to include participants from further afield.
4. Engage with range of methods of inviting participants to the study.
5. Breaking down research into manageable sections, specific targets.
6. Contact Tony with info by email.

08/06/2009

Attended the BACP conference on the proposed regulation and entry onto the HPC register. Questions that came up from the meeting were around:

- Training and standards. What about students embarking on non-accredited courses now?
- What about those that weren't already accredited?
- The differences between psychotherapists and counsellors?
- The level of qualification being fixed at 5 for counsellor and 7 for psychotherapist?

BACP said they would introduce COD modules to enable us to train to Level 7 and fill the clinical gap in training and that legally we were able to register on both parts of the register.

To do: Email Sally Aldridge to ask for the presentation.

14/08/2009

Conducted the first pilot interview at my home with a friend (a qualified counsellor). I discovered that the questions are too long and too in depth. She found it hard to remember what she was answering and had to keep checking. It also felt a little nerve wracking for me operating the equipment and trying to keep the interview on track and keeping mindful that this is not a counselling session. It also had a sense of falseness about it as I was working with a friend that was just helping me out.

22/08/2009

Second pilot interview conducted with another friend at her home. This interview went much better than the first. I amended the questions based on the last interview, and simplified the structure somewhat.

23/08/2009

I emailed Tony Parnell with my sample recruitment plan:

1. Email my network of colleagues and ask them to recommend a friend.
2. Email colleges and universities asking to forward to students. I also offered to forward hard copies for posting as the students are on Summer break, although may pick up a couple of students in September.

3. Post out my poster to agencies and charitable organisations.

I forwarded the various letters forms, posters and questionnaires to Tony Parnell for feedback. I have added to the criteria that participants will be Person-Centred trained. I think I may possibly see more links in their experiences than I would trying to compare for example a person-centred counsellor with a clinical psychologist. In simple terms my study will focus on 'before, during and after', for example their motivation to become a counsellor, their training experience and how that changed their expectations and the reality of 'now' after graduation. I have bought the equipment for recording the telephone interview and also the digital recorder for face to face (or I will use my lap-top). I have also opened a Skype account, which also records two-way conversations and is private and secure.

12/09/2009

I have come into my office today for peace and space in order to get on with my research piece. I am feeling a bit overwhelmed with all that has to be done but Tony said the main thing was to get the data collected; so am going to push on with getting out the invites.

- Sent out 27 individual emails to counsellor colleagues/ friends asking them to recommend someone unknown to me that I can interview.
- 8 x universities
- 4 x organisations

01/03/2010

Looked up all the accredited courses on the BACP website, 86 listed. Did a mail-round to 56 of them. All those that listed person centred, humanistic or integrative. My rationale being that many students move onto another school or certificate when they have completed the PC model. So far, I have found generating a sample extremely frustrating. People agree to do the study and then drop out.

30/06/2010

I invited a further 8 potential applicants to do the study with me. I have also emailed the three people who said they would do it some weeks ago. I'm disappointed to find that I started this journal 12 months ago and that I am only now getting into the study. I had set my self a target of getting the entire set of interviews by the end of June. It is the 30th today and I can't now fulfil that. I am hopeful that I can get a few from those contacted today. I have five and if I could get another five I would be very happy with this.

08/08/2010

Huge sense of relief felt today when I sent the final typed interview back to the last participant. Last one out of the way, now I can really get started on the work.

10/08/2010

I managed to get to Edge Hill last night and registered to use the library there, which is great to have access to lots of books. I wasn't sure where the journals were stored exactly and there wasn't a massive section on research

but enough for me to go on with. I plan to go to Chester today to do a more thorough search of the database for the literature review.

30/08/2010

I am feeling massively apprehensive at my ability to pull all of this together. Seems like a huge project but I really just need to keep taking it one day and one chapter at a time. Have looked at my title again and also went through my research proposal to make sure that I have everything in the main body of the piece that needs to be there. NB: I must remember to use Rita's notes (from my proposal) to develop my research. they showed exactly what I had overlooked.

20/03/2011

Incredible that I have had six months away from this research piece and I am just now getting back to it. I do feel though that I have a renewed enthusiasm and I have shifted my focus to where it really matters. Amazing that my focus has come out of the word 'Professional' a tiny insight which has had a huge impact on the way I am looking at my study. I was with the students last night (tutoring) and the lead tutor asked the students to work on the word Professional/ism. What it meant in the widest context etc...it made me think really, or realise, that this is it, the new way of being is to be a 'professional counsellor' and I don't think any of the people in my study, or many others actually came into the 'helping arena' with this in mind. It's the notion that it seems a lot of us come into counselling to help or heal or to be of service to others or universally to 'give back' and then we find ourselves confronted with a bewildering raft of paperwork and requirements and rules and barriers. I can recall at the outset of the diploma feeling really confident in my ability to help people but by the end of the course I was a lot less sure of myself. I clearly felt like I was the right type of person, as is expressed by many others that I talk to; but it became something I became more unsure of as time went on. I recall making my application to the BACP and not only having to show them proof that I was on a course in counselling, but also to prove who I was (ID check) from a GP. There there is the CRB clearances that we go through. The accreditation process. The upward academic shift. And the spectre at the feast is now the additional government regulation and professional titles. After having gone through my interviews with other counsellors, I felt I could sum up our experience in one word and that was...bewildered. It appeared that everyone came into the profession with good intentions, they were a 'certain type' of person. Not do-gooders as many suspected. But people who could deal with 'others' emotional pain, and be with that person as they worked through very difficult issues. "It is a pleasure and a privilege to do this" was how it was described by many...but trying to harness and clarify and identify the particular skills and expertise into being able to do this has encouraged a raft of expectation of the counsellors to 'prove' themselves at every level. And they are wondering what they are proving...their goodness...as a person? Their fitness to practice? Their ability to help? And all the while the measures and procedures increase and take up more and more of the counsellors time to administrate, and finance and suck the lifeblood out of them. It kills their desire, their creativity, their freedom.

20/07/11

Came to uni yesterday. Have booked four days accommodation here in order to try and get into my work without distraction.

21/07/2011

At breakfast this morning I read through the first couple of chapters of 'Writing Your Dissertation' by Derek Swetnam and Ruth Swetnam and a couple of things came up for me.

1. That the older student by definition is more prone to marital, family and health problems. I have to accept that this is part of the problem in my life, and that the problems will keep coming. I need somehow to work around them and make doing this research part of my life.
2. The book warns against rationalising difficulties, which is blaming home, job, health and family unfairly for my lack of progress. So that is what I will do...not blame, just get on with it.

I do think that booking here and making it a priority shows others that "*this is important to me*" and that "*I need to do it*",for me. I liked one student's tip in the book, which was to 'not' regard this as work. Not associate it with work, but to see it as 'escape' from the reality of your everyday life.

22/07/2011

I have gone through my research methods module and checked that everything I want to be in the study is included. I have highlighted and put in italics the sections that Rita suggested that I revise. Added post-it notes to the methodology section of the file to remind myself that the time-frames section is missing and needs to be completely re-written. Next I shall go through the proposal and check that all of that ties up with the main body of the piece.

31/07/2011

Today I want to finish the audit trail for my interviews and have them all ready for printing. Then I want to do some more work on the methodology chapter. Maybe pull the sampling section together today. This feels like a bit fat luxury, being on campus and being able to do this every day. 9:50am. Have revised and edited the sampling section. Printed off pages 8-13 of Methodology 'Data Collection section' for revision. Will now spend some time on the preparation of the interviews again. 1:40pm I have only edited and prepared four interviews. This is much more time-consuming than I expected.

03/08/2011

So today I have revised, amended and cut my Methodology chapter. It is around the 5k words but needs to be revised and improved a lot before it is anywhere near ready to pass to my supervisor. I also need to go back to the top of my interviews and prepare them for printing. I have to prepare them as advised in Maykut and Morehouse.

23/11/2011

I have reflected on my past methods of study and noted that whilst I used to enjoy 10/12-hour stints at the PC, studying, researching etc...that it just isn't

viable anymore with my life being in so many segments. I discussed this with my clinical supervisor as a PD issue and vowed to at least 'try' to alter my studying methods and try other ways of working. My supervisor was sceptical, as am I, but I fear that if I don't do something differently, I will run out of time.

27/11/2011

A couple of things that have occurred to me whilst preparing the interviews for printing. Firstly, I have realised that numbering the questions is irrelevant as they overlap and some of the units of meaning may overlap or belong in different categories or create new categories of meaning. Secondly, as I scanned the interviews I noticed that there seems to be some correlation with how 'person-centred' the counsellor is with how passive they are politically. I have just looked at one counsellor's interview where she expresses quite strident views, and she has additional CBT training and this 'variable' seems to have coloured her views perhaps making her more assertive?

28/09/2012

I have spent the last few weeks 'unitizing' my work and then cutting out each piece and attaching it to a card.

09/11/2012

I have used up all the units of meaning of interview one. I have divided them into categories and posted them onto the wall of the lab onto flip-chart paper, making 24 categories in all. I have made the categories quite broad ranged. It's only when I added a second voice that I realised that some of Participant As units can be filtered further. For example, I had entitled the first category 'Motivation to be a Counsellor'. The participant has listed several reasons and I posted 7 units under this category. As soon as I added a second voice I realized that some of the original 7 units needed to be filtered down further dividing up the participants ideas/reasons/motivation into his interest in psychology, finding something that fits, self validation, being an advice giver, receiving affirmation from others thus creating further categories. I can already see crossover categories and some units that fit into more than one category.

29/11/2012

Have finally managed to get the last units of information onto the wall. The whole room is filled with information and is interestingly a physical depiction of what is going on inside for me, the whole topic has just become huge beyond everything I thought it would. As things stand it feels like it could just get bigger and bigger and I am wondering how I am going to reassemble this into something legitimately consumable for others. It's has though, really highlighted the different areas that are important for the individual participants, which feels important. I have put all their voices together as one, but they have retained their individuality within that.

23/12/2012

I have VERY slowly worked through each sheet (category) filing it into a box, and transferring the themes onto A4 sized discovery charts. The initial discover chart became unwieldy and beyond those first few themes, started to

cloud the issues or add too many dimensions, beyond perhaps what the participants were actually saying and maybe more driven from my own internal imaginings. Feels really good to have everything filed and contained in a small space. Bizarrely, I feel that I have regained some measure of control over the data, manhandling it in this way, but also reducing that physical area that it was taking up.

20/04/2013

I have started to list the categories into sections and how many pieces of unitisation in each. Re-filing them into the box as I go. I have just done category one, 'work experience prior to counselling' or background. I have realised that some people are still quite routed in their past and pondered on how much time it took me to detach from my past and move forward and how much I am integrating the past back into my current time and my future now?

17/05/2013

Filtering through the categories and seeing more themes and patterns emerge. I have been wondering where the propositions were going to come from and it's weird ...it's like they're emerging almost like magic. I am getting things out of the data that is unexpected. I thought it was going to be very black and white but it isn't at all. For example...I have been seeing something come out of it about people being in a big life transition when they come to training to be a counsellor and I had this sense of them being like a group of 'lost souls'. Made me wonder if I was one of them? I have started to notice what the 'Variables' might be on this 'sample' as well. Prior to dissecting the information I had thought about things like geography and gender and type of training establishment. But I am now realising that the more important variables are about "what was happening at the time that I am trying to judge or study" Such as, who did their interview before the government changed and who did it after...and did this have any impact on the outcomes of the research? Also, how far from graduation were the participants Many are still firmly rooted in their past live, some have moved a way a little and the person that was the most grounded in the present, was the oldest and the longest from graduation. Simply said "they can't take it away from us, our qualification". Simple as that.

31/05/13

Met with Tony and talked about the structure of the piece and how many words should go in each section. That was helpful. I learned that I need about 5-6k words in the outcomes chapter and that I should focus my efforts here. Also talked about other chapters being positioning statements and that the real work is the outcomes and the discussion. Tony also advised to try and get the focus onto about 5/6 main themes. I currently have 13 themes and 51 sub-categories.

1st and 2nd June 2013

I spent Friday, Saturday and Sunday finishing the fourth filtering stage. I transferred, unit by unit every piece to one main document. I was also then able to choose a sentence here and there to either transfer into other categories or duplicate. At the end of the exercise I had 74 pages and 35k

words. How to choose 5k words from this? During the process of transferring and constant revision of themes and sub-themes (and with the above goal in mind) I have reduced the number of themes to 7 with 36 sub-categories. What I am learning from manipulating the data in this way is to present the absolute truth of what the participants have said. I am noticing my own 'assumptions and biases' being stripped back again and again as I collect their text into sub-categories and see that "what I thought was important to them as a group" hasn't always been the case. Sometimes, one participant says something powerful and meaningful and I can see that I have assumed that that has a meaning for the others too. This is a very humbling process working hard to present 'other people's' truths. Avoiding the need to make the truth pretty or palatable or slanting it to my own ends i.e. to make my study look better.

10/06/2013

Have to get onto the editing of this piece. I have printed off so that I can see the words on the page. I find I miss things on the screen. I will edit and update 2/3 pages at a time and then do the same update on the PC. Don't want to get too far ahead of myself or I lose the thread of things.

30/06/2013

This thing that has created so much fear is not as scary as I thought. Just a logical process you go through. I have Chapters 1 and 3 complete, Chapter 4 is on its way and 2 is taking shape.

22/09/2013

I'm nearly at the finish line. Editing everything from start to finish and desperately trying to lose words. I need to start getting a bit brutal. I hate this part of a module or study, where you get right to the end and then have to lose parts that you really like, but that don't either add anything or answer the question!

10/11/2013

Well I have got to the end of Chapter 5 and am editing as I go. I need to go through each section and answer what the impact was on the participants of the evolving political and professional climate. I need to check it against Chapter 2 and make corrections and try to reduce the amount of pages...by half! I also need to ask the question...what was the impact on the participants? How did *they* say they were impacted?

26/11/2013

I have handed in the first draft of my dissertation today and although I have the appendices still to type up, it is otherwise, finished. Feels like a massive relief to get here. I know there will be corrections and amendments and also lots of checks still to do, but the main body of work is done. It's my son's girlfriend's graduation today and it feels right that the whole family is meeting for a celebration dinner.